THE

HISTORY

OF

FRANCE,

FROM THE

Commencement of the Reign of HENRY III. and the Riſe
Of the CATHOLIC LEAGUE;

TO THE

PEACE of VERVINS, and the ESTABLISHMENT
Of the famous EDICT of NANTES,

In the REIGN OF HENRY IV.

TOGETHER WITH

The moſt intereſting Events in the Hiſtory of Europe, during that Period.

By WALTER ANDERSON, D. D.

Printed for the AUTHOR,

And ſold, in *London*, by Meſſ. DILLY in the Poultry; ROBSON, New Bond-ſtreet; BECKET & DU HONDT, and WILSON & NICHOL, in the Strand; and, in *Edinburgh*, by J. BALFOUR, and the other Bookſellers.

M, DCC, LXXV.



THE PREFACE.

THE following hiſtory comprehends, as its main ſubject, the ſecond period of the civil wars of France; diſtinguiſhed from the firſt, already given to the public, by the origin of the *famous catholic league*, and its fatal progreſs, to the almoſt total ſubverſion of the monarchy. By means of this progeny of fanaticiſm, the fate of the kingdom, intereſting to all the other powers of Europe, is thrown into ſuſpenſe, during the reign of Henry III. In the commencement of that of Henry IV. the political ſcene becomes more gloomy and dark, until, by the amazing efforts of that heroic warrior, and amiable Prince, the monarchy is reſcued from impending ruin.

There is no period of foreign hiſtory more commonly peruſed by the intelligent part of the public, than that of France, in the reigns of Henry III. and IV. The memoirs of Sully, alone, have diffuſed the knowledge, and the reliſh of it. To enlarge the narrative of facts, where they are ſlightly touched, or abridged, in that valuable work, and to draw out the important events, and illuſtrious characters, more to view; appeared an hiſtorical deſign, which might merit the public attention. To render it more inſtructive, and entertaining, a large and ſeparate review is taken, of the cotemporary hiſtory of Europe, which is pregnant with great events, and revolutions. Conſonant to the grandeur of the military and political ſcenes, are the actors in them. In modern times, Europe has produced no Princes of ſuch diſtinguiſhed fame, in war, and in peace, as Henry IV. of France, Eliſabeth of England, Philip II. of Spain, William I. Prince of Orange, and Pope Sixtus Quintus; and to theſe we may add the Dukes of Parma, and Clement VIII. Philip is, indeed, the crafty diſturber, or the bold invader, of the o-

ther European ſtates. But we behold the machinations of his policy, and the efforts of his mighty power, overthrown. After maintaining a war of thirty years in the Netherlands, embroiling France, conquering Portugal, and ſending forth his *invincible armada*, to ſubdue England, he is obliged to ſign the peace of Vervins, with Henry IV.

While martial ſpirit, and bravery, are eſteemed in any nation, it may be preſumed, that ſome recital of the military actions of Don John of Auſtria, of the Duke of Parma, of Count Maurice of Naſſau, and of the Cardinal Archduke Albert, along with thoſe of Henry IV. will be accounted entertaining. Though the regular armies, now part of the eſtabliſhment of every ſtate, then, only, began to be ſet on foot, and were, chiefly, introduced by Philip II. yet the genius, which forms great commanders in every age, is ſignally diſplayed in their campaigns. In reſpect of the preſent times, this different ſtage of the military art, is not only marked out in them, but a ſpecies of the Gothic heroiſm, now exploded, is preſerved in the hiſtory of their actions and characters.

In the manners and characters of the inferior chieftains, in the French civil wars, we behold what the nobility generally were, in moſt of the kingdoms of Europe; not two centuries ago. It muſt be owned, that, to undaunted ſpirit, and bravery, many of them joined ſome of the moſt admired qualities of the human mind. It deſerves notice, that the ſketches given of a number of their characters, in this aera of the French hiſtory, are better vouched, than ſome we find in later periods. In the conſtant ſtrife of arms, and in the diverſity of fortune attending it; their peculiar paſſions, their motives of action, and their aims, together with the vigour of their minds, would be diſcloſed in lively and authentic colours. The many volumes of memoirs, which remain of their actions, are generally

generally written, not by recluſe men, at a diſtance from the military, or political ſcenes, but, either by the chieftains themſelves, or by thoſe who were their conſtant companions in the field, and their confidents in the moſt ſecret deliberations.

Beyond the period of the famous treaty of Vervins, and the eſtabliſhment of the edict of Nantes, 1599, the hiſtory of France could not be continued, in the detail, without ſwelling it into a huge volume. The fatal death of Henry IV. renders the end of his reign *a dramatical cataſtrophe*, but not the proper finiſhing of an hiſtorical period. Yet, to complete the view of ſo diſtinguiſhed an aera; the work is concluded with an illuſtration of it, till the year of Henry's death, 1610. In this ſupplement, the author has endeavoured to comprehend whatever is intereſting, in the events, domeſtic and foreign; and, eſpecially, to ſketch out the great lines of the political adminiſtration of France, and of Henry's *grand ſcheme*, with reſpect to the ſtates of Europe; which are the capital ſubjects of the hiſtory of the laſt ten years of his reign. With what degree of ſucceſs, or title to approbation, this attempt is made to throw light upon the events, deſigns, and characters of ſo ſignal a period of the hiſtory of France, and of Europe, muſt be ſubmitted, with deference, to the judgment of the public.

CON-

CONTENTS.

REIGN OF HENRY III.

BOOK I. CHAP. I.

Short Regency of Queen Catharine in Abſence of Henry III.——His Retreat from Poland, and his Journey to France.——Conſultations about Peace or war with the Proteſtants.——The Declaration of it, againſt them, diſadvantageous to the State.——Henry's Maxims of Government.——His Marriage. Page 1

CHAP. II.

Duke of Anjou's Elopement from the Court.——Manners of the latter.——A foreign Army, joined to that of domeſtic Inſurgents, headed by Anjou.——Treaty of Peace, and Conceſſions granted to him and the Proteſtants. 18

CHAP. III.

Foreign Affairs.——Of Poland.——Of the Low Countries.——Of Spain.——Of England.——Of Germany and Italy. 32

CHAP. IV.

Cabals in Paris.——Origin of the Catholic League.——Manifeſto of its Partizans.——Conduct of the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé——Aſſembly of the firſt States of Blois. 43

CHAP. V.

Edict reſtrictive of Toleration.——Comparative View of the Military Strength of the Proteſtants——The King of Navarre's Magnanimity and martial Spirit.——Pacification of Poictiers.——Political Refinements, and devout Proceſſions of Henry III.——Military Exploits contraſted with Gallantry.——Singular Inſtance of Queen Catherine's Diſſimulation. 62

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Henry addicted to Favourites and Effeminacy.——Duke of Anjou's Turbulence, and League with the States of Holland.——Order of the Holy Ghoſt inſtituted.——Conteſt of the Court with the Clergy.——Inſurrection of the Proteſtants.——Peace of Floix. Page 78

CHAP. VII.

Hiſtory of ſome Years more free of domeſtic Broils.——Characters of Henry's Favourites, Joyeuſe, and Eſpernon.——Convention of the Aſſembly of the Notables.——Henry's affected Devotion.——Characters of his Counſellors, and of the three Brothers of Guiſe. 93

CHAP. VIII.

Foreign Affairs.——Of the Netherlands.——Of Spain, Portugal, and the Weſt Indies.——Of England.——Of the Pontificate of Gregory XIII. 108

BOOK II. CHAP. I.

Duke of Guiſe's Ambition and Arts.——Manifeſto of his Partizans.——Calumnies ſpread by them.——Henry's timid Oppoſition to the League.——Its Progreſs in the Kingdom.——Origin of the Council of Sixteen in Paris.——The King's ſhameful Conceſſions to the League. 125

CHAP. II.

Treaty of Nemours executed by Henry.——Procedure of the King of Navarre.——Elevation of Sixtus Quintus to the Papal Chair.——Five Armies ſent againſt the Proteſtants.——Prince of Condé defeated.——Affairs in the Southern Provinces.——Campaign in Poictou.——Negotiation at St Brix. 144

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Conference for Peace at St Brix.——War renewed.——Cabal of the ſixteen Partizans at Paris.——Henry informed of the Plots of the League.——His Embarraſment.——Victory of the King of Navarre in the Battle of Coutras.——Advancement of the German Auxiliaries of the Proteſtants.——Their Mutiny and Diſſipation.——Henry's Conduct in the Campaign againſt them. Page 170

CHAP. IV.

The Duke of Guiſe promotes his Projects of Ambition.——Fatal Death of Henry; Prince of Condé.——Invectives and Satires againſt the King, and his Favourites.——Conſpiracies of the Pariſians.——The Barricades of Paris.——Ignominious Conceſſions by the King. 193

CHAP. V.

Gratifications to the Duke of Guiſe and his Friends.——Aſſembly of the States at Blois.——Account of their Procedure.——Henry irritated againſt the Duke of Guiſe.——Aſſaſſination of the Duke and his Brother.——Death of Catherine de Medicis.——Her Character. 215

CHAP. VI.

Reconciliation with the Duke of Mayenne tried by Henry.——Outrages of the Pariſians againſt his Authority.——Expulſion of the Counſellors of the Parliament, at Paris.——Inſtitution of that of the League.——Confirmation of the Duke of Mayenne's Authority, in the Council of the League.——Revolt of many Cities.——Henry's Retreat to Tours.——His Treaty, and Interview with the King of Navarre. 236

CHAP. VII.

Foreign Affairs.——Of the Netherlands.— -Of England and Scotland.——Of Spain, and the Armada of Philip II.——Of the Invaſion of the

the Coaſt of Spain by the Engliſh.——Intereſt of the Powers of Europe in the civil Wars of France. Pag. 258

CHAP. VIII.

Fortune of the War, at firſt, various.——La Noüe, and Chaſtillon, diſplay their military Conduct and Valour.——Progreſs, and Superiority of the King's Forces.——Paris beſieged by them.——Henry is ſtabbed by James Clement, a Friar.——The Wound proves mortal.——His Death and Character. 282

REIGN OF HENRY IV.

BOOK II. CHAP. I.

Parties of the State, upon Henry's Acceſſion to the Throne.——The Deſertion of various Chieftains from his Army.——His Retreat into Normandy.——The Duke of Mayenne's Army repulſed by him, at Arques.——Suburbs of Paris aſſaulted by him.——Mayenne's Oppoſition, and Controul of the Spaniſh Party in the League.——Henry's military Activity.——Famous Victory of Ivry gained by him. 295

CHAP. II.

Henry's Army advanced to Paris.——The Siege, and obſtinate Reſiſtence of the City.——Its Relief, by the Duke of Parma.——His Retreat into Flanders harraſſed by Henry.——Affairs of the remoter Provinces.——Advancement of Gregory XIV. *to the Pontificate; and his Fulminations againſt Henry.——Intrigues of the Third Party in the Court.——Diſcord of the Leaguers; and the Rage of the Six-*

Sixteen.——Siege of Roüen by Henry.——Return of the Duke of Parma into France.——His Campaign, and difficult Retreat. Page 320

CHAP. III.

View of the Power of the League.——Convention of its States.——Conference of the oppoſite Parties.——Henry's Converſion to the Catholic Church.——Procedure and Conteſts of the States of the League.——Ceremony of Henry's Abſolution performed at St Denis.——Virulence of the incendiary Preachers againſt him.——Efforts of the Legate, and the Partizans of the League, to ſupport their declining Power.——Publication of the Satyre Menippée.——Pope Clement's Oppoſition to Henry.——His Aſſaſſination attempted by Barriere. 361

CHAP. IV.

Henry's Inauguration at Chartres.——His admiſſion into Paris concerted; and executed without Oppoſition.——Submiſſion, and Treaties of various Cities and Chieftains, with Henry.——The War ſpun out, by Philip II.; and the Duke of Mayenne,——John Chaſtel's Attempt on the Life of Henry.——War proclaimed againſt Spain.——Continuation of the Hiſtory of the Netherlands.——Procedure of the Proteſtant Party. 394

CHAP. V.

Fortune of the War with Spain various.——Henry's Victories in Burgundy, balanced by Loſſes in Flanders.——His Abſolution pronounced by the Court of Rome.——Domeſtic Incidents during the Siege of La Fere.——Calais taken by the Archduke Albert.——New offenſive League with England.——La Fere ſurrendered to Henry.——Arrival of the Cardinal of Florence, the Pope's Legate, in France.—— Account of the Earl of Eſſex's Expedition to the Coaſt of Spain. 423

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Assembly of the Notables at Roüen.——Their Project for managing the Finances.——Discontent of the Protestants.——Amiens surprised by the Spaniards.——Siege and Recovery of it by Henry.——Interposition of the Pope for a Peace between Henry and Philip. 449

CHAP. VII.

Motives of Henry and Philip to conclude the Peace of Vervins.——Articles of this famous Treaty.——Death of Philip II. and his political Testament.——Concession of the Edicts of Nantes, to the Protestants.——Abstract of its Articles politically considered.——Opposition to it surmounted.——Conclusion of Review of the general Subject of the History.——Characteristicks of the Genius and Reign of Henry IV.——The Grand Project for the Peace of Europe formed by Henry and Queen Elisabeth.——Sketches of the subsequent History of France, till the fatal Death of Henry IV. 465

SUPPLEMENT to the SKETCH given of the Reign of HENRY IV. from the 1599, after the Peace of Vervins, to his Death. 487

EXPLICATION of HENRY's great Design, for establishing the Equilibrium of the Powers of Europe, and fixing them in a durable State of Peace. 513

THE

THE HISTORY OF FRANCE.

REIGN OF HENRY III.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

Short Regency of Queen Catharine in Abſence of Henry III.—His Retreat from Poland, and his Journey to France.—Conſultations about Peace or War with the Proteſtants.—The Declaration of of it, againſt them, diſadvantageous to the State.—Henry's Maxims of Government.—His Marriage.

THE ſucceſſion of Henry III. already King of Poland, to the crown of France, compared with that of his brother and predeceſſor Charles IX. had ſeveral apparent advantages. Though the civil war, inſtead of ceaſing, was only ſuſpended by a ſhort truce, and all the former ſources of inteſtine diſcord ſtill remained, it ſeemed practicable, in the circumſtances in which he aſcended the throne, to compoſe the diſtractions of the nation; and, by means of a wiſe adminiſtration, to reduce the contending factions

BOOK I. ANN. DOM. June 1. 1574.

Book I. 1574.

to a more permanent tranquility, than could be attained from the artificial and temporary expedients uſed in the late reigns. In reputation for his abilities, both in war and in peace; early accuſtomed to the command of armies, and having tried the burden of royalty upon the Poliſh throne; Henry was believed capable of exerting that degree of prudence, temper, and ſteady reſolution, requiſite to reſtore the dignity of the crown, and to procure peace and ſafety to the nation.

This proſpect, ſo deſireable to a people torn with domeſtic broils, was favoured by the advantages lately gained by Catharine of Medicis the Queen-mother, both over the party of the Proteſtants, and that of the Catholics, called the *Politicians*. Though the latter was headed by her ſon the Duke of Alencon, who, upon his brother's election to the crown of Poland, ſucceeded to the title of Anjou; yet that political Princeſs had in ſuch a manner exerted her authority and her addreſs before the late King expired, that the Duke himſelf, and the King of Navarre her ſon-in-law, under the pretext of the plot of la Mole and Coconnas, were kept in cuſtody by her; and conſequently the deſigns of their partizans were defeated. In this ſituation, ſhe obliged them to concur with her exerciſe of the ſovereign authority during Henry's abſence in Poland, and to * ſupport the credit of the letters of regency granted her by the late King. By tranſmitting theſe to the governors of the cities and provinces, and by muſtering up all the forces of the ſtate under commanders ſhe could confide in; Catharine found not much difficulty in ruling the helm of government, and commanding, at leaſt, a temporary ſubjection from the ſeveral orders of the ſtate. Without meditating a more general truce than that which already ſubſiſted with the proteſtants, ſhe was ſatisfied with having ſecured Henry's quiet

Queen Catharine's adminiſtration, in the abſence of Henry.

* Matthieu, folio edit. liv. 7. p. 386.

quiet acceſſion to the throne of France, while ſhe left the conſummation of the public peace* to his future management; when, upon his arrival in the kingdom, a cabinet-council, formed according to his pleaſure, might aſſiſt him in the negociation and proper eſtabliſhment of it. 1574.

While the Queen-regent thus ſet bounds to the commotions of the ſtate, her adverſaries, finding their other turbulent aſſaults ineffectual, renewed their virulent libels, and ſatyrical writings, againſt her adminiſtration †. Ever hated by the proteſtants, and offenſive to many of the catholics, her character was bitterly aſperſed in various publications. It is remarkable, that the hideous plots and poiſonings imputed to her, and all the ſcurrility of thoſe rude pieces, did not provoke her to teſtify her ſpleen and reſentment ‡. Vindictive as ſhe is known to have been, ſhe ſhowed the ſurpriſing command ſhe had of her temper in leſſer matters, by reſtraining the parliament of Paris from ordaining puniſhments againſt the preſumptuous publiſhers of them. So eaſily did an imperious Princeſs bear perſonal abuſes and invectives; which, in times of the greateſt public liberty, have been deemed unſupportable to government. Hardened by the frequency of ſuch public reproaches, and intent on her political deſigns; Queen Catharine deſpiſed the calumny of factions ſhe hoped to ſubdue, and proceeded to add, to ſome recent examples of her vengeance, a memorable one, in the condemnation and puniſhment of the famous Count de Montgomery.

The fate and ſufferings of this proteſtant chieftain are too ſingular and intereſting to human nature itſelf, to be mentioned without ſome ſpecial reflections on them §. An object of public animadverſion,

* Matthieu, folio edit. p. 402. † Daubigné, Hiſtoire Univer. fol. edit. tom. 2. liv. 2. chap. 8. ‡ D'Avila, liv. 6. § Brantome des Hommes Illuſtres, duodec. edit. tom. 2. p. 64.

Book I.

1574.

The Count de Montgomery condemned;

on account of the fatal wound he accidentally gave to Henry II. he was thought by ſeveral to have incurred a degree of criminality above others of his party, by engaging himſelf in the civil wars; in oppoſition to the ſons of that Prince, whom, though altogether without deſign, he had deprived of life. Always valiant in the field, and famed for ſkill and execution in many difficult enterprizes, his reſolution and his prudence ſeemed, alike, to have forſaken him; when, in extremity, inſtead of dying in the breach, he truſted to a precarious capitulation for his life, at Domfront; which put him into the hands of the Queen-mother, who was believed to preſerve the deſire of ſacrificing him to the manes of her huſband. Acquitted and pardoned by the dying voice of Henry II. he was judicially proceeded againſt, more upon the motive of revenging that monarch's death, than on the exhibited charge of his rebellion. Unperceived before to have ſhown any fearful apprehenſions of his fate, a ſudden terror ſeized him when firſt led to the bar; and he was heard to ſay, with ſurprize and conſcious ſhame, when he looked upon his judges, "I tremble before theſe unarmed men!" The warrior, who only thought of dying in the ardour of combat, ſword in hand, found a new and more ſtriking trial of his courage, in a ſentence of death, expected in cold blood. But he ſoon reſumed his fortitude, and bore the rack, ſeverely applied to his limbs, with a compoſure rarely beheld in a ſufferer of ſo much torture. As nature had marked his countenance with dignity, it was amazing how it was ſeen preſerved by him *, when every joint of his body was almoſt torn aſunder. All the ſpectators were ſtruck with admiration, and a tranſport of grief, when they heard him ſay, with an unchanged tone of voice, "Let "my degraded children know, that, unleſs they have the virtue to "deſerve and to recover their rank of nobles, I conſent to the arret "againſt them." Bearing himſelf altogether like one invincible by pain

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 8.

pain or fear of death, he would not permit the executioner to blindfold him, when about to lay down his head on the block; and, in his whole geſtures and aſpect to the laſt, exemplified that dauntleſs ſpirit and reſolution that is known to have diſtinguiſhed the ruder ages above the more poliſhed; and which, in peaceful and effeminate times, appears incredible to mankind.

1574. and executed.

A courier, diſpatched into Poland by the Queen-regent, quickly brought Henry the account of his ſucceſſion to the throne of France. It appears, that he ſwayed the Poliſh ſceptre with leſs ſatisfaction, from the expectation he had of this event. His diſtaſte of the manners of the Poles, as well as of the form of their government, was ſuch, that he often ſhut himſelf up whole days in his chamber*, where his ſole amuſement was the reading or anſwering letters from France. Retiring with his few French confidents, he conſulted what was to be done by him upon the important and intereſting intelligence he had now received. His reſolution to quit Poland bore no diſpute; the only queſtion was, Whether this purpoſe ſhould be openly avowed, or be diſſembled, and conducted with ſecrecy? The firſt opinion was ſupported by a regard to decency and the King's honour; whoſe ſecret retreat from a throne, to which he had been ſo lately elected, might appear unworthy, in the eyes of other Princes, as well as injurious to the Poliſh nation. But the other ſcheme was favoured by Henry's own inclination, by the certainty of his demand of leave being oppoſed by the Poles, by the conſideration of the critical ſtate of affairs in France, and by the Queen-regent's requiſition of his immediate return into that kingdom. The concern for the Poliſh ſtate being far outweighed by Henry's affection for France; he reſolutely laid aſide all apprehenſion about unfavourable accidents that might fruſtrate his deſign, or expoſe him

Henry informed of his acceſſion to the crown of France.

* Matthieu, ibid.

BOOK I.

1574. Determines to escape from Poland.

to be affronted in its execution; and determined directly to contrive and prosecute the favourite project of his escape from Cracow.

The detail of the circumstances of Henry's clandestine retreat out of Poland, is more accommodated to the strain of memoirs, than to the stricter page of the historian. It was attended with no incidents that can embellish or heighten the singularity of the event itself*. Having, in an assembly of the Polish senators, spoke of his journey into France as only eventual, and endeavoured to dissipate the alarm they had taken about his intention of leaving them abruptly; he was privately so well assisted by the stratagems of his French domestics, that, in the middle of the night, he found his way, undiscovered, out of the palace into the fields. He was obliged to walk a quarter of a Polish league before he got to the place where horses were prepared for him. In a country little known by them, his few attendants being separated, and their speed obstructed; a wooden bridge over a river, which they passed and broke down behind them, luckily saved them from the pursuit of a body of Polish horsemen that was sent to overtake the King. The danger of this ceased by his reaching Peizna, the first town on that border of the dominions of the Emperor of Germany. In the mean time, at Cracow†, the discovery of Henry's escape created the utmost tumult and confusion; till, finding it incapable of a remedy, and having little faith in the assurances of his return, from two letters left in the palace, they were obliged to digest the affront, and concert such measures as they could, for the present quiet and defence of the state; then threatened with the incursions of the Turks and Tartars. But, notwithstanding this disobliging retreat into France, Henry still retained his title of King of Poland, and insisted, long after this period, that he could not be divested of his right of election to that royalty.

The

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 389.

† La Vie du Cardinal Commendon, par Gratiani, oct. edit. liv. 4. p. 645.

1574.

The appearance, more ſuitable to his dignity, which Henry's progreſs to the capital of Germany aſſumed, and his reception by the Emperor, are worthy of particular notice; as the honour done him in both teſtified the reſpect paid to his crown, and the courteſy that prevailed among the princes of that age. None of them, indeed, were ſo much celebrated for humanity and benevolence of manners as Maximilian*. It is reported of him, that he had never once mortified any perſon by a refuſal, or a harſh word. The marks of eſteem and affection with which he treated Henry were ſuch, that the latter had reaſon to think, that the French politeneſs, ſo highly valued by him, was ſurpaſſed by Maximilian's unaffected expreſſions of friendſhip and regard. After a magnificent aad amicable entertainment at the Imperial court for ſeveral days; Henry, paſſing through Stiria and Carinthia, arrived in the territory of Venice. As this city had been long renowned for its grandeur, and the diſplay of its wealth and pomp, and the reception given there to John Laſcaris the Emperor of Conſtantinople, and to the Queen of Cyprus, was particularly famous in Europe; it may be agreeable, and, in ſome meaſure, inſtructive, to recite the entertainment Henry met with, which became no leſs celebrated.

He arrives in Germany;

While the monarchies of Europe increaſed in bulk, and acquired, by force of arms, additional territory, the growth of the Venetian republic ſhowed, how the improvements of trade and of the arts could advance the power of a ſmaller ſtate, and render it ſignally opulent and flouriſhing. Its ſources of defence, and its means of making conqueſts, were ſeen to equal or exceed thoſe of large kingdoms, whoſe revenues, hardly ſupporting their military eſtabliſhments, were ſoon exhauſted by war. But, within this famous city, the public ſhows and feſtivities, which mark the progreſs of the ingenious

and makes his progreſs by Venice.

* Gratiani, ibid. p. 649. Heiſ. D. de l'Empire, liv. 3.

Book I. 1574. nious arts, and of cultivated taſte, in a nation, diſcovered the utmoſt refinements that induſtry and commercial wealth had made in that age. This appeared by the exhibition of them in honour of Henry's arrival in Venice *. At the entrance of the great canal, the *Bucentaure*, that lay ready to receive him and his train, had been long a pompous figure of the maritime pride of the ſtate; and the vaſt number, and rich decorations, of the *gondolas*, that were rowed around this huge veſſel, ſhowed the general opulence and gaiety of the citizens. While, under a triumphal arch, the King made his proceſſion in the evening into the city, all the windows ſhone with artificial lights, in divers figures of flowers *de luce*, and other emblematical devices. The repaſt provided for him in the grand palace of St Mark conſiſted of the moſt coſtly diſhes, and delicate viands, ſumptuouſly ſerved up; and a hundred muſical voices and inſtruments cheared the entertainment. In the arſenal, the warlike ſtores of the ſtate, ſurveyed by Henry, were reckoned to conſiſt of five hundred pieces of cannon, and firelocks and arms for fifty thouſand men †. It is related by de Thou, and other hiſtorians, as a prodigy of the naval art, that a galley of conſiderable ſize, in the ſpace of a few hours, was conſtructed in all her parts, and being rigged and mounted with cannon, ſerved to convey the King and his train along the canal to his lodgings. He beheld, as a curioſity, the order of balloting in the ſenate; and, for higher honour, was permitted to perform an act of ſovereignty in it, by raiſing one of the nobles to the rank of the *Pregadi*. The balls and maſquerades that were given, and the whole expences furniſhed for the accommodation of Henry's retinue, that was now become numerous, teſtified the vaſt opulence, and the improved civility and politeneſs of this republican ſtate, which, always in friendſhip with France, had courted a cloſer amity with her monarchs, after the exceſſive increaſe of the power of the houſe of Auſtria.

June 28.

Upon

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 396. † Thuan. lib. 58.

1574. and by Turin;

Upon Henry's arrival at the court of Turin, where his regard to the Dutcheſs of Savoy, his aunt, detained him for ſome time; he had occaſion to conſider the important and intereſting advice, given him by the Emperor Maximilian, with reſpect to his future treatment of the proteſtants in France, and the reſtoration of the peace of his kingdom *. It had been repeated to him by the ſenators of Venice, and by moſt of the princes of Italy and Germany, who ſaw him in his progreſs; and, concurring in their wiſhes for the ſtability and welfare of the French monarchy, recommended the neceſſary and prudent meaſure of religious toleration. The Duke of Savoy had alſo permitted Henry Lord Damville to come to his court as a ſollicitor of peace; and had promiſed to aſſiſt him in obtaining an accommodation with the King, in behalf of his brother, the Marſhal Montmorency; who, together with de Coſsé, of the ſame military rank, had been impriſoned by the Queen-regent, as a chief aſſociate in the faction of the *politicians*. But, dreading that her ſon Henry might, from ſuch admonitions and entreaties, be prepoſſeſſed in favour of peace †; Catherine took care to ſend ſeveral inſtructed miniſters to prevent, both his determination of the general point, and his agreement with Damville. As theſe envoys could uſe various arguments with Henry, with reſpect to the ſtate of parties, and the behaviour of particular perſons in the kingdom, of which, on account of his abſence, he was unable to judge; it was leſs ſurpriſing that they prevailed with him, ſo far, at leaſt, as to ſuſpend his deciſion, until he arrived in France. Yet his reception of Damville being generally conſidered as the teſt of his own inclination to peace or war; his unamicable diſmiſſion of that chieftain was an unfortunate circumſtance, that tended, directly, to the confirmation of the broils of the ſtate. Excluded from his hopes of a reconciliation with the court, as well as mortified with Henry's

where envoys from France meet with him.

* D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 10. Matthieu, ibid. p. 399. † D'Avila, ibid.

Book I. 1574.

diſdain of his ſollicitations of it, Damville, upon his return into Languedoc, ſent his agents to the aſſembly of the proteſtant chiefs and deputies at Millaut *, with offers of his friendſhip and aſſiſtance.

Before Henry left Turin, from an exceſs of liberality, to which he was inclined, and in complaiſance to the Dutcheſs of Savoy, he made a gift to her ſpouſe, of Pignerol, Savillan, and la Perouſe; the only fortified † places that France retained on the Italian ſide of the Alps. By precedents in the French monarchy, in a tranſaction of this kind, the officers of ſtate, and the provincial governors, might be afterwards made reſponſible to the crown, at the peril of their honours and lives, for their advice and behaviour. On this account, the Duke of Nevers, the governor of theſe fortreſſes, inſiſted to have his remonſtrance, againſt the reſignation of them, entered into the regiſter of the parliament of Grenoble; and Birague the Chancellor refuſed to ſign the letters-patent for the deed. Henry, having affixed his ſignature to them, was ſaid to have, early, ſlighted one main field of the military renown of his predeceſſors; who had often fought it in the wars of Italy.

Henry arrives in the territory of France, Sept. 7.

But the general affection of the French nation to their King, excited now to particular fondneſs, from the diſtinguiſhed honours paid him by ſo many foreign princes, was manifeſt from the concourſe of all ranks of people to Lyons, where he was ſoon expected. The ſplendid welcome given him by the Queen-mother at Pont-de-Beauvoiſin, and his gracious reception of the Duke of Anjou and the King of Navarre, though preſented to him ‡ as not inculpable, enlivened the propenſity to congratulate his auſpicious return to ſway the ſceptre of his anceſtors; inſtead of a foreign one, which

* Ibid. Matthieu.
† Henault, Abregé chron. oct. edit. p. 348.
‡ Matthieu, ibid. p. 402.

which he had, from early reputation, acquired. His warm love to his native kingdom being well known, and proved by his inſtantly relinquiſhing the Poliſh throne; the moſt agreeable conceptions were formed, both of his diſpoſition and ability to promote the peace and welfare of the monarchy. Yet, upon this occaſion *, it was obſerved, that Henry affected more ſtately reſerve, in the admiſſion of the nobles to his preſence, than had been uſual with the French Kings; and, as if ſenſible of ſome degradation of the royalty in the reigns of his brothers, that he ſtudied to efface the remembrance of it, by the moſt formal marks of deference to his dignity, which he required.

Book I. 1574.

The grand queſtion relative to peace or war with the proteſtants being now debated in the cabinet-council, the Queen-mother's political influence again appeared from the deciſion. An embroiled ſcene being moſt ſuited to her ſingular genius, and tending to ſignalize her † importance in the ſtate; ſhe wiſhed not to behold, in the commencement of her ſon's reign, a new turn given to the policy of the cabinet, ſo different from that of her own adminiſtration. As ſhe had been ſucceſsful in vanquiſhing the power of faction, ſhe alſo affected to give her late management all the air of a complete triumph over it; from which ſhe thought a treaty with the proteſtants, or new conceſſions to them, would too much derogate. It appears that ſhe inſiſted with Henry, that the ſeizure of Damville at Turin, which ſhe had adviſed, would have rendered him abſolute maſter of his kingdom. Whether the King and his council allowed themſelves too eaſily to be perſuaded that ſuch vaſt ſuperiority over the parties of the kingdom had really been gained; or that Henry had ſo grateful a ſenſe of the ſervices Catherine had performed in his abſence, as diſpoſed him to a temporary compliance with her dictates;

War with the proteſtants determined.

* Ibid. † D'Avila, Matthieu, ibid.

Book I. 1574.

dictates; it is certain that the determination for the continuance of the war with the proteſtants, which is attributed to her inſtigation, was a reſolution unpolitical, and pernicious, and inconſonant to the ſubſequent appearances of Henry's temper, and to his ſchemes of adminiſtration. In the mean time, the unhappy conſequences it would produce were directly apparent. Beſides the incitement of the proteſtants to all the oppoſition that reſentment and deſperate rage could ſuggeſt, and renewing the former fierce antipathies of the two religious ſects in the kingdom; the meaſure was attended with the particular diſadvantage of throwing the Montmorencies, and their partizans, the *politicians*, into confederacy with thoſe who were proclaimed enemies to the ſtate. After what had paſſed with regard to the Marſhal Damville, it was evident that this would enſue. Queen Catherine, indeed, truſting to her wonted artifices *, thought ſhe could divert the Marſhal from uniting with the proteſtants; and ſhe tried, by negotiating with him, and by raiſing ſuſpicions of him, as an aſſociate, among that party, to prevent it. But, notwithſtanding all her ſtratagems, the formal inſtrument of his coalition with them was not long after this drawn up, and ſigned in a general aſſembly of their deputies at Niſmes. It became a pattern for the terms of a like pacification betwixt the proteſtants and *politicians*, or thoſe called the *peaceable Catholics*, in other provinces, beſides that of Languedoc; where its efficacy in reſtraining the feuds and hoſtilities was remarkably advantageous †. By means of it, Damville maintained that peace in his provincial government, which Henry, from the perverſe counſel given him, refuſed to the kingdom; under the deluſive notion, that it was more the act of a King to proclaim hoſtilities, than to enter into a reaſonable accommodation with thoſe who were deemed, though unjuſtly, the opponents of his authority.

The

* D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 10. ibid. chap. 17. † Ibid.

1574.

Events of the war inconſiderable.

The irregular and deſultory enterprizes of war which now commenced in ſeveral provinces, were too inconſiderable, for ſome time, to merit attention*. Some of the ſieges renewed the examples of that obſtinate reſiſtence, on the ſide of the proteſtants, who were the weaker party, which the animoſity peculiar to civil wars, and the reciprocal cruelties exerciſed by the parties, tended to produce†. At Livron, in Dauphiny, where Henry ſhowed himſelf in the camp, he was made ſenſible what atrocious ideas of his character his immediate proſecution of the war againſt them had communicated to a party enraged by their conſtant ſufferings. When, from the walls, they beheld the approach of his train, they were heard to pour out the moſt reproachful exclamations. "Theſe are the eleves of St Bartholomew," ſaid they, "whoſe religion, againſt humanity and honour, authorizes them to ſtab us in bed; but we ſhall not fall ſuch eaſy ſacrifices." Theſe wild expreſſions of their reſentment were equalled by their obdurate reſolution in induring the ſiege, which, after ſome time, was raiſed. In the midſt of various diſadvantages, when their party remained, during the abſence of the Prince of Condé in Germany, without a head; ſeveral chiefs and captains of valour and experience ſupported the reputation of their arms. Amongſt theſe, beſides the famous la Noüe, Montbrun, in Dauphiny, was the moſt diſtinguiſhed. Several bold and fortunate enterprizes atchieved by him, at this period, compenſated, in ſome meaſure, the reduction of various towns, and proteſtant garriſons, by the Catholic forces. But the defenſive power of the party conſiſted in that combination formed among their chiefs at Niſmes; which, uniting them under the Prince of Condé, and connecting them with Damville and his brother de Thoré, then ſolliciting German ſtipendiaries, afforded a conſiderable domeſtic ſupport, and the proſpect of foreign aſſiſtance to them.

* Ibid. chap. 13. † Matthieu, ibid. p. 407. Memoires de Sully.

BOOK I. 1574.

It might have been, with ſome appearance of reaſon, inferred, that Henry, who had in this manner declared war with the proteſtants, and provoked the politicians to diſaffection, was certainly inclined to adopt the ſyſtem of the zealous catholics of his kingdom; and to patronize the party of the Guiſes, and advance their intereſt in the ſtate. But this was by no means his intention *. Thinking it rather became him to act upon the maxim of Lewis XI. and deliver the royalty itſelf from thraldom, he wiſhed to ſubvert the influence both of the Guiſes, and of the Montmorencies; and, upon the ruin of the faction promoted by them, to advance the depreſſed authority of his crown. Yet this reſolution, which ſhowed both true policy and ſpirit, was proſecuted by him in a peculiar ſhape; rather agreeable to nice ſpeculations, than conſiſtent with the manners or genius of the age and nation. In his apprehenſion, an alteration of the ceremonials of his court appearing highly conducive to his purpoſe, he endeavoured to inſtitute a new ſyſtem relative to them, comprehending many formal and minute regulations, about the time of admitting the princes, nobles, and officers of ſtate into his chamber, about that of public audiences, and of preſenting petitions, and other occaſions of acceſs to his perſon. From a copy of them, corrected with Henry's own hand, Matthieu has given a ſketch of theſe † ordinances, which, to the French courtiers, as well as to other ranks of people, would appear extravagantly formal and affected. Though, in ſeveral ages, the inventors of faſhions and modes of equipage, and the patterns of them to other nations, the French never were addicted to ceremonious rules of addreſs. In the courts of the moſt pompous of their monarchs, fewer of theſe formalities of ſtate had taken place than in other kingdoms. It ſeemed, from the particular genius of the people, that thoſe expreſſions of reverence to their princes, preſcribed by natural affection, were more

Some innovations are made by Henry in the offices of the exchequer.

* D'Avila, ibid. liv. 6. † Ibid. p. 403.

1574.

more reliſhed among them, than ſuch as had the appearance of conſtraint, by eſtabliſhed forms. But, without regard to this circumſtance, Henry inſiſted on theſe novelties as important in themſelves, and preparatory to others of higher moment in the ſtate, which he meditated. There were two innovations ſoon introduced by him, which had a cloſer connection with the ſinews of government. The one related to the acquittances of money drawn from the exchequer, which, contrary to the uſages of the ſtate, he ordained to be made at pleaſure, under his own hand; without ſuch accompts being ſtated by the treaſurers, and tranſmitted to the proper chamber. The other concerned the preſenting of petitions, and the form of obtaining grants in conſequence of them. It had been long reckoned the excluſive privilege of the chief nobles to ſolicite the gifts of penſions and places of honour or profit, not only for themſelves, but for their friends and partizans. This was a great prop to that ſervile dependence on them, in which they endeavoured to retain the inferior claſs of the nobleſſe and gentry, and enabled them to engage the latter in all their turbulent ſchemes and factions. It was ordered by Henry, that all petitions ſhould be offered to himſelf by the parties intereſted in them, and that his private ſignature ſhould warrant the immediate diſpatch of his grants by the ſecretaries or the chancellor. By this controul of the intereſt of the grandees in procuring favours from the crown, and by his arbitrary diſtribution of his finances, Henry believed himſelf capable of accompliſhing a change in the ſtate, favourable to the overthrow of faction, and the aggrandizement of the royalty. But, in the practice of his theory, it appeared, that he had only contrived a more ready method of exhauſting his treaſure, and paved the way for the advancement of favourites, which became afterwards moſt remarkable in his reign.

In

BOOK I.

1574. Dec. 23. In the end of the year, the famous Charles Cardinal of Lorain, uncle to the Duke of Guiſe, * died of a violent fever at Avignon. With faults that expoſed his character, and diſcovered that ambition and vanity were ever predominant in it, he poſſeſſed ſome eminent qualities, eſpecially thoſe of erudition and eloquence, becoming his high dignity in the church. An inſtigator of perſecution, without being rigid in his principles; a chief miniſter of ſtate during three reigns, without almoſt any other political ſcheme or purpoſe, but that of exalting his family; he rendered himſelf particularly odious to the proteſtants, and diſguſtful to many of the catholic courtiers: He appeared, upon occaſions, profuſe of his wealth, and charitable, if one could be thought ſuch who always acted from vanity. Upon the advice he gave, Henry formed the project of alienating that part of the eccleſiaſtical revenues which was held by *titulars*, or nominal churchmen; and propoſed, by means of this emolument, to inſtitute an order of knights, called that of the *holy paſſion*. By this counſel to the King, the Cardinal forfeited much of that popularity among the votaries of the catholic church, which he had ſtudied during his life to acquire; and made his exit be little regreted by them.

Death of the Cardinal of Lorain.

His character.

By the Cardinal's death, an objection was removed to Henry's marriage with Louiſe, daughter to the Count de Vademont, and niece to the Duke of Lorain. The Queen-mother dreaded, that the Cardinal would turn this alliance of his family with the crown to the augmentation of the intereſt and power of the Guiſes; and, on this account, to the King himſelf, the match ſeemed not altogether eligible. But having conceived ſome paſſion for the Princeſs of Vademont, Henry the more required to have his taſte of a conſort gratified, after the loſs of his favourite miſtreſs the Princeſs of Condé,

* D' Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 12.

dé, whom he had loved with ſuch whimſical affection, that he uſed to draw blood from his finger to pen the epiſtles addreſſed to her. His political ſcruple to follow his preſent inclination being now diſſipated, the match was quickly concluded: And the bride being conducted to the court by the Duke of Lorain, the royal nuptials were ſolemnized ſoon after the commencement of the enſuing year,

1575.

Henry marries the Princeſs of Vaudemont. Feb. 13.

C C H A P.

CHAP. II.

Duke of Anjou's Elopement from the Court.—Manners of the latter.—A foreign Army, joined to that of domeſtic Inſurgents, headed by Anjou.—Treaty of Peace, and Conceſſions granted to him and the Proteſtants.

Book I. 1575.

THOUGH Henry deſired to humble the proteſtants, and, in the hope of giving a ſignal blow to their power in the beginning of his reign, proſecuted the war againſt them; both his temper and his political aims more correſponded to peace. He diſcovered no taſte for renewing the laurels of his martial fame in his early victories of Jarnac and Moncontour; and he knew that the continuance of the civil war would nouriſh thoſe turbulent heads of faction which he wiſhed to ſubvert. The trial of hoſtilities with the proteſtants not ſucceeding according to his hopes, he ſoon began to cool in that reſolution he had taken, at the inſtigation of others, and to ſhow himſelf diſpoſed to more temperate meaſures. As the envoys of the Queen of England, and of the proteſtant Princes of Germany, joined in their interceſſions with him for an accommodation with their ſuffering friends, he eaſily condeſcended to receive a deputation from that party. Hitherto he had offered no terms with reſpect to religious toleration, but thoſe of private liberty of conſcience. By this procedure, equally illiberal and injudicious, Henry incurred a manifeſt diſadvantage, which the court had often before experienced. Inſtead of voluntary conceſſions by the grace of the ſovereign, which would have honoured the throne, a treaty was to be made with thoſe who had taken arms in deſpair; and, by their hardy reſiſtence in an unfavourable conjuncture, teſtified their ability to maintain a long and bloody conteſt. The delegates of the proteſtants were further animated on this occaſion, by being joined, in their

Henry diſcovers his averſion to war.

their way to Paris, by the envoys of the Prince of Condé and the Marſhal Damville *, who encouraged them to heighten their demands. Preſuming, from the ſudden change of the King's meaſures with them, that the ſeaſon was auſpicious, they preſented ſuch a memorial of their requeſts to him, as exceeded the boldeſt in any former capitulation with the court. Henry, after peruſing it with equal amazement and diſpleaſure, declared, that no propenſity he could have to peace would ever reconcile him to ſuch conditions: Yet, diſinclined to purſue the ſcheme of hoſtilities, he choſe not altogether to break off the negociation. D'Arennes, one of the proteſtant deputies, remained at court, in order to continue it, while the reſt returned to Niſmes, to conſult with their conſtituents.

1575. April 15.

A medley of war, and of negociations of peace, now enſued; in which neither the military nor the political operations proved remarkable. The captivity and condemnation of the proteſtant chieftain Montbrun only requires to be mentioned, as he was reckoned the firſt of his rank in the kingdom that had taken up arms, and had almoſt never quitted them till this fatal accident of his being taken priſoner. His reply to Henry †, who wrote to him in the ſtyle of a King for the delivery of ſome captives, marked the inſolence which civil war had diffuſed amongſt the rude warriors of the provinces: 'Let him know,' ſaid he, 'that this may paſs in time of peace; but, in war, there is no ſuch inequality amongſt men.' By a ſentence of the parliament, he was beheaded at Grenoble. Francis de Bonne, Lord of Les Diguieres, aſſumed his place of command in Dauphiny; and, with a more cultivated genius, and ſuperior talents, diſtinguiſhed himſelf above moſt of the proteſtant partizans, by his martial enterpriſes in the courſe of the civil war.

May. June.

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 17. † D' Aubigné, chap. 10. De Serres.

BOOK I.

1575.

His brother the Duke of Anjou escapes from court.

While the hostilities of the adverse parties seemed only a faint memorial of their former violent rage, fresh feuel was added to them from the bosom of the court itself. The Duke of Anjou, too apt to be hurried on to any turbulent purpose, when his vanity was not soothed by some present object, began again to discover his listless and irregular ambition. Little qualified to concert or execute any momentuous project, he was yet capable *, by the counsel of others, to foment intrigues and discord in the court, and to raise a formidable party amidst the convulsions of the kingdom. For some time restrained, more by fear than by a sense of duty, or affection to the King his brother, he was at length induced to revolt from the court, when he considered that the resolute opposition of the protestants, and the apprehension of their being assisted from abroad, had constrained the ministry to enter into a treaty with them. Persuaded † that in this conjuncture he might demonstrate his own importance, and turn the issue of affairs to his advantage, he contrived to elude the vigilance of the Queen-mother's spies, and secretly escaped from Paris.

As connected with this event, the private history of the court might here be introduced, and instances recited of the quarrels and enmities prevalent in it, from the amours and gallantries that were in vogue, and from other emulations peculiar to the unruly and licentious times. But, in place of many anecdotes of this kind, to be found in the life of d'Aubigné, Queen Margaret's memoires, Brantome, and other vouchers; it may suffice to insert a few remarks relative to them. During two preceeding reigns, which approached to minorities, the manners of the court had degenerated, from the model of them under Francis I. and Henry II. Unawed by such representatives of the royalty; the effrontery, and licence of the nobles,

Manners of the court.

* D'Avila, ibid. Matthieu. p. 417. † D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 18.

bles, converſant only in the profeſſion of arms, and accuſtomed to the ſoldier's haughty tone, became predominant. Every thing that was rude, extravagant, or fantaſtical in the manners and cuſtoms of the age, was diſplayed without reſtraint or correction. Wanton defiances, challenges for imaginary or the ſlighteſt offences, and bloody rencounters, were not unfrequent within the precincts of the court. A number of the young nobility, by antient cuſtom admitted to the Louvre, as the beſt ſchool for their manners and diſcipline, had become a nurſery and chief ſource of theſe diſorders. Henry III. deſirous of repreſſing the influence of ſome over-grown families, thought it political to attach to his ſervice, by particular encouragement and flattery, thoſe eleves of his court, who being, generally, the deſcendents of the decayed nobility, were ready and fit, as ſoldiers of fortune, to be oppoſed to the opulent and powerful of their order. But, from the indulgence of their outrageous notions of honour, and martial proweſs, animoſities and feuds were cheriſhed in the court; and private quarrels, intereſting the principal perſonages in it, frequently became affairs of ſtate*. Queen Catharine neglected not to maintain her ſway in the government, by exciting amorous, as well as political jealouſies, among the youthful princes. Margaret, Queen of Navarre, ſhowed her ability in quickening the ſcene of intrigues, and rivalſhips in gallantry; till, all affection and amity among thoſe of the blood-royal being, by ſuch means, impaired, the court was precipitated into diſcord and confuſion†. At this time du Gaſt was the principal favourite of the King; and Buſſy d' Amboiſe the choice companion and counſellor of his brother: Both of them were *braves*; a character much affected, and admired among the young nobility of the court. Their ſcuffles in arms were famous. It was after a triumph obtained in one of them, by Buſſy, which Henry reſented,

* Matthieu, ibid. liv. 2. p. 102.

† Memoires de la Reine Marg. liv. 1. p. 98. et

Book I. 1575.

reſented, that the Duke of Alençon took his reſolution to quit the court, and eſpouſe the party of the malcontents.

The Duke's high quality, and name in the ſtate, more than the opinion of his perſonal abilities, tended to inſpirit the diſcontented parties, and increaſe the revolt from the court. No ſooner had he

Sept. 15.

publiſhed his manifeſto, in the town of Dreux, than numbers of catholic and proteſtant Lords, and officers of the army*, repaired to his ſtandard. The effect of Henry's favouring the more dependent nobles of his court, in oppoſition to thoſe of higher rank and character, was ſeen from this appearance of diſaffection. Being a meaſure of particular delicacy, it required more time and nicety of conduct, than he thought fit to employ with regard to it†. Anjou's embracing the ſide of the confederate politicians and proteſtants, operated no leſs effectually, in procuring the foreign levies attempted to be raiſed by the latter. Until this event was known, the Prince of Condé's negociation for them, in Germany, had been attended with ſmall ſucceſs. But all the ſcruples of the Elector Palatine, and Caſimir his ſon, were removed, with the aſſurance, that the King's brother, openly, patronized the cauſe of the confederacy in France. Beſides the greater military force to be expected from his appearance in the field, they well knew that it would open the way to ſome advantageous and lucrative treaty with the court ‡. The offers made to Caſimir, and other princes, being ſuited to their intereſted expectations, Condé, with little difficulty, obtained the levies he deſired. They conſiſted of no fewer than ten thouſand Reiters, and as many German Lanſquenets and Swiſs infantry; beſides the parties of French, ready to join them in the confines of the empire.

Reſort of many to the ſtandard of Anjou.

The

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 1. D'Aubigné, chap. 18. † Matthieu, ibid. p. 422. ‡ De Serres, Engl. tranſ. fol. p. 774.

1575.

The ſudden and unforeſeen commotions in the kingdom, and a foreign army engaged to invade it, were emergencies highly alarming to the court. The King's diſtaſte of war, already ſuſpected, was manifeſt from his agitation and perplexity, upon this occaſion. His ſingular appearance in religious proceſſions appointed by him, began likewiſe to be noticed, as a mark, either of extreme affectation in one of his youthful age, or of his ſtudy to divert the chagrin of his mind, by occupations unſuitable to his natural genius *. It was the Queen-mother's advice, as d' Avila reports, that delivered Henry and his council of ſtate, from their preſent embarraſſment. She declared that, to allure the Duke her ſon to a treaty, any ſtretch of terms might be agreed to; and that, upon this plan, ſhe hoped to ſucceed with him, without detriment to the ſtate. Her confidence, in believing ſhe could ſoon induce him to an accommodation, aroſe, both from the knowledge ſhe had of his variable temper, and from having it in her power to call to her aſſiſtance the Marſhals de Coſsé and Montmorency, whom ſhe kept priſoners in the Baſtile †. Next to the Queen of Navarre, theſe two chieftains were known to have the greateſt credit and influence with Anjou. It is remarkable that, though impriſoned on ſuſpicion of treaſon, and debarred the privilege of a legal trial, they were reckoned worthy to be truſted, in the moſt delicate and intereſting buſineſs of the government. Such, it may be concluded, were the characters of many others, whom Queen Catharine made priſoners of ſtate; more from the view of accompliſhing her political ſchemes, than from the conviction of their criminality. Equal to every trial of his integrity, Montmorency had yielded himſelf a priſoner, when he might have eſcaped. Injured in his reputation, and when his brother and family were perſecuted, he had the equanimity and virtue to diſcharge, with honour, the office that was required of him, for the benefit of the ſtate. In one diſtinguiſhed

Alarm of the court at Anjou's revolt;

whch Queen Catherine endeavours to remedy by a treaty.

* Ibid.

† Thuan. fol. edit. Francofurti. tom. 2. lib. 61. p. 66.

Book I. 1575. diſtinguiſhed by fortitude, and high ſentiments of honour, ſuch moderation and compliance were the more laudable; eſpecially as inſtances of them were rare in that period *. It is related, by ſeveral of the hiſtorians, that, upon a falſe report being ſpread, of the Marſhal Damville's death, a deſign was entertained by the court, to diſpatch, privately, his brother Montmorency, and his friend de Coſſé. If this anecdote was true, Montmorency's behaviour reproached the violence and barbarity of the times.

Advancement of part of a foreign army;

In conſequence of the reſolution of the Prince of Condé, and his confederates, to acknowledge the Duke of Anjou for their head, and to yield him the command of the foreign army; it was determined that a detachment of it ſhould march to join with him, and facilitate the advancement of the main body. Thoré Montmorency was appointed to lead this diviſion of troops into France. When the court received this intelligence, orders were iſſued by the King, for aſſembling all the forces that could be ſpeedily muſtered, on the frontiers of Champagne; through which province the adverſe army was expected to penetrate. They drew together, to the number of fourteen thouſand men, under ſeveral catholic commanders, directed by the Duke of Guiſe the governor of Champagne. Thoré, more galant and zealous in the ſervice he had undertaken, than capable of acquitting himſelf like an experienced officer, underſtood not how to march his troops, in the neighbourhood of an enemy, without riſking a battle †. He ſuffered himſelf to be entangled by the catholic forces in his march near Dormans, on the river Marne; and, though ſcarcely equalling a third of their number, having come to an action with them, he met the uſual fate of raſhneſs and inexperience, by the defeat or diſperſion of the greateſt part of his de-

and its defeat at Dormans;

November.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 419. Thuan. ibid. D'Avila.

† D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 19.

1575.

tachment. A wound received by the Duke of Guiſe, in this combat, rendered it moſt memorable. The conſpicuous ſcar, from a piſtol-ſhot, in his cheek, got him the name of *Balafré;* and the blood, which he loſt, being deemed by the violent catholics to be early devoted to the cauſe of religion, was ever remembered among them, with pious and warm ſentiments of their gratitude and affection to him.

Where the Duke of Guiſe is wounded.

This victory, though much magnified by the catholics, was too inconſiderable to remove the apprehenſions of the court, or to abate the confidence the confederates had in their domeſtic ſtrength, and foreign auxiliaries. The Queen-mother's project of a negociation being ſtill approved*, ſhe ſet out, with the two Marſhals, Montmorency and de Coſſé, to meet with her ſon, at Compagné in Poictou. As the political genius of this Princeſs founded a belief with reſpect to her ſtratagems, upon every occaſion; it was ſuſpected by many, that Anjou's revolt was a contrivance of her's, to get him placed at the head of the malcontents, and the foreign army; in order to diſconcert and ruin their meaſures. But this refined conſtruction of her conduct is not reconcileable with the difficulties ſhe found in her negociation; and the ſlight circumſtance mentioned in ſupport of it, about her ſending the Duke's equipage after him when he eloped, may be conſidered as a ſmall exertion of her artifice, to raiſe ſome ſuſpicion of her holding a ſecret underſtanding with her ſon. After ſeveral weeks ſpent in conferences, and, notwithſtanding all the arguments uſed by the Marſhals, ſhe could only obtain, on hard conditions, a truce for ſix months. So extravagantly favourable were they, for the foreign auxiliaries, and the proteſtants, as well as for the Duke of Anjou, that, to account for Catharine's acceptance of them, we muſt ſuppoſe her to have reckoned

A truce with Anjou is obtained;

* De Serres, ibid. D'Avila, ibid.

Book II. 1575.

koned much on her ſon's inconſtancy in his purpoſes; and that, before a treaty of peace was concluded, ſhe knew how to ſatisfy him with eaſier terms. As the ſtipulations of the truce correſponded with thoſe of the pacification, that will ſoon be mentioned; the particulars of them, to avoid unneceſſary repetition, may here be paſſed over. The armiſtice was publiſhed in the end of the year.

Dec. 20.

but the execution of it is interrupted,

To ſtop the advancement of the German army into the kingdom, and to ſuſpend the rage of domeſtic hoſtilities, may be reckoned a happy effect of the truce procured by Catharine; whatever particular motives, or views ſhe had, for the conceſſions made by her. Yet this deſireable conſequence was hardly felt from it *. Obſtacles to the execution of its articles were raiſed; whether from ſiniſter intentions of the court, or from circumſtances not ſufficiently conſidered. The governors of ſeveral towns, which were to be given up as ſureties to the confederates, refuſed to ſurrender them; and, tho' the court appeared not, as on former occaſions, to inſtigate this oppoſition, but rather to be diſturbed with it; ſuſpicion and diſtruſt of the Queen-mother's ſincerity, eaſily took place. The levy of ſome foreign troops, contrary to what had been ſtipulated, on the part of the court, furniſhed a ſpecial ground of jealouſy and complaint to the confederates. They began, not only to ſtand on their guard, but to counteract the ſuppoſed duplicity of Queen Catharine; ſo often experienced by ſome of them. It is ſaid, that Anjou himſelf, on this occaſion, acted like a true eleve of his mother; and that, being leſs ſuſpected, he outdid her in circumvention. While ſhe laboured to remove difficulties, he feigned to be ſorry for them; and, with pretended reluctance, advanced his troops to the north of the Loire. Advertiſed by him of the interruption of the truce, Caſimir, who hovered on the frontier, entered with his army into Cham-

and the foreign army advances.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 426.

Champagne*. His march through Burgundy was attended with the pillage, and depredation of the country, uſual to thoſe mercenary bands; while the Duke of Mayenne, who commanded the King's forces, was too weak, in numbers, to oppoſe their progreſs. In the mean time, as they directed their rout to the Bourbonoiſe, to join with the Duke of Anjou, a particular event enſued, which gave freſh diſquiet to the court. 1576. Feb.

Amidſt the private jealouſies and jars which prevailed amongſt thoſe of the blood-royal, the King of Navarre, Henry of Bourbon the firſt prince of that collateral line of the houſe of France, found his ſituation expoſed him both to uneaſineſs and diſadvantages. The behaviour of Margaret of Valois his conſort, being ſuch as rendered Henry III. her brother highly diſſatisfied with her; Navarre's intereſt at court ſeemed altogether to rely on the eſteem of his perſonal qualities. Upon account of the excellency of his natural temper †, more acceptable to the King, than his brother Anjou was; he had yet a dignity of ſpirit that correſponded not to the place or character of a favourite, with Henry. In the King's particular fits of indignation againſt his brother, when he believed Anjou capable of the worſt deſigns againſt him; the moſt lively expreſſions of a cordial friendſhip and eſteem flowed from him to the King of Navarre. But, whether from former jealouſies and rancour entertained againſt his family, and its connections with the proteſtant party, or from the preference, in all things, given to the minions of the court; little regard was ſhown to the advancement of the fortune or dignity of the latter. On the contrary, to ſow diſcord between him and the Duke of Anjou, appeared to be the particular ſtudy of the Queen-mother; as Henry's ſole intention ſeemed to be, to flatter him with empty aſſurances of his favour. When the royal army was now aſ-

The King of Navarre's ſituation at court determines him to leave it.

ſembled

* Thuan. lib. 62. p. 99.

† Matthieu, ibid. p. 417.

Book II. 1576.

ſembled in the neighbourhood of Paris, and the rank of Lieutenant General in it, which had been often promiſed to him, was to be diſpoſed of by the King; inſtead of finding his application for it effectual, he was told, only, That ſome thing better was reſerved for him*. The famous Madam de Sauve, with whoſe enchanting wit, added to her perſonal charms, he was captivated, is ſaid to have ſtruck forth the ſparks of indignation and martial ardour in his mind, by having told him, 'That his attainment of that office was made the jeſt of the King's favourites.' Awaked from the oblivion of his family-intereſt and dignity, or feeling, firſt, the ſuperior impulſe of his ſpirit to honour and fame; he ſoon determined to throw off his inglorious dependence on the court, that, together with his other attachments there, tended only to embarraſs and degrade him. It whetted his reſolution, when he conſidered that Anjou, upon motives far leſs natural than thoſe he might own, had aſſumed the merit of ſupporting the proteſtants, the old and ſteady partizans of his family †. Aſſiſted by a few confidents, he concerted meaſures for his eſcaping; which, notwithſtanding the difficulties attending the deſign and execution, he effected, with a preſence of mind, and celerity, that diſtinguiſhed all his future enterpriſes.

Accuſtomed to a refined conſtruction of occurrences, the Queen-mother eaſily diſcovered in the King of Navarre's retreat from the court, a ground of ſatisfaction. She perſuaded herſelf, that jealouſy, and interference of party-intereſt, would be the conſequence of his appearing among the confederates; and, in this hope, ſhe again ſet out, with more aſſurance of her being able to bring them to a reaſonable treaty. But the King of Navarre, with a prudent and laudable reſerve, avoided joining the army at this time, and contented himſelf with ſending deputies to a council of its chiefs at Moulins.

Upon

* Mem. de la Reyne Marguerite, liv. 1. p. 100. and 105. D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 20. † Mem. de Sully, liv. 1.

1576. March 10.

Upon the muſter of the united forces of the confederates, they were found to be increaſed to above thirty thouſand regular troops. The Queen was made ſenſible that they counted ſufficiently upon their ſuperiority in the field. All her arts, and induſtry, aſſiſted by the intervention of the Queen of Navarre, and the Marſhal Montmorency, proved hardly effectual to obtain an abatement of their arbitrary demands; which were inconſiſtent, both with the honour and ſafety of the ſtate. Notwithſtanding the mitigations that were procured, it was manifeſt that Queen Catharine was * conſtrained to purchaſe peace, by a ſhameful latitude of conceſſions, eſpecially in behalf of her ſon, intoxicated with the higheſt notions of his acquired authority in the kingdom.

The numerous army of Anjou diſpoſes the court to a treaty with him;

With regard to the gratification of Anjou, the Queen thought it political to ſhew the utmoſt indulgence; as favourable grants to him ſeemed leſs diſhonourable, and were the ſureſt means of detaching him altogether from the party of the confederates. His appenage was † augmented with the dutchies of Tourain, Berry, and Anjou; to which three rich eſtates an annual penſion of a hundred thouſand crowns was added. In them, he was permitted the exerciſe of ſeveral regal rights, both civil and eccleſiaſtical; ſo that his acquiſitions formed a large principality. Next to the Duke's contentment, that of Caſimir was provided for, by a conceſſion of arrears, claimed as due to him in the late wars, by pecuniary appointments for him, and by preſent acquittances; the diſcharge of all which became no ſmall load upon the ſtate. Inconſiderable, in reſpect of theſe, were the compenſations of the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé. To the latter of them the city of Peronne was granted, with the promiſe of the government of Picardy ‡. But the

its conditions are exorbitant to both Anjou,

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 419. Sully, ibid. † D'Aubigné, chap. 27. p. 412.
‡ Thuan. lib. 62. p. 102.

Book II.

1576.
and the proteſtants.

the articles reſpecting the toleration, and religious liberty of the proteſtants, were peculiarly indulgent and extenſive. The public exerciſe of their worſhip, with the leaſt reſtriction of places, and all the natural and civil privileges of other ſubjects, were permitted to them. Chambers of juſtice, compoſed of an equal number of catholics and proteſtants, in the eight courts of parliament, were allowed to be inſtituted. Late arrets and forfeitures of honour, pronounced againſt them, were repealed; and the benefit of this redreſs was extended to the memory of the Admiral Coligni, and other ſufferers by the violent perſecutions and maſſacres. For their ſecurity, eight garriſon-towns were to be retained by them. To confirm theſe eſtabliſhments, and ratify the pacification, an aſſembly of the States General was to be ſummoned to meet at Blois, within ſix months. In the mean time, an edict, declarative of the whole articles, was formed, and verified by regiſtration in the parliament of Paris; where, for greater ſolemnity, the King himſelf preſided in his bed of juſtice.

Fifth general peace with the proteſtants,

In this manner did a ſurpriſing tranſaction paſs, in the early period of Henry's reign. It involved a peace with the proteſtants, called the fifth general one; favourable to them in various reſpects, beyond any precedent; and remarkable, as being purchaſed by the help of the catholic party, called *the politicians*; headed by the apparent heir of the crown. It expoſed the oppoſite counſels, which the King had raſhly embraced; and contraſted Queen Catherine's advice to him in the government, with her expedients, as a negotiator. The example of the bold and ſucceſsful inſurrection, which produced this change in the maxims of the court, was hurtful and ominous to the ſtate; while every advantage was thought to be gained, by drawing back the Duke of Anjou from his revolt, and the diſmiſſion of the foreign army. With Queen Catharine, her beloved

beloved artifices were, ſtill, a reſource againſt the fulfilment of the treaty; but it is probable that Henry, without intending perfidious evaſions of it, reckoned that the judgement to be pronounced upon it, by the ſtates of the kingdom, would be the beſt rule and apology for his ſubſequent conduct.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Foreign Affairs.——Of Poland.——Of the Low Countries.——Of Spain.——Of England.——Of Germany and Italy.

Book II.

Affairs of Poland.

IN turning to the ſubject of the foreign hiſtory, that of the Poliſh kingdom merits our firſt attention. Forſaken by Henry, in the manner already related; that ſtate ſeemed to be ſuddenly expoſed to all the diſtractions incident to its turbulent conſtitution. But the aſtoniſhment, into which the grandees were thrown by the uncommon emergency, and the dread they had of hoſtile invaſions from their neighbours *, kept them from falling immediately into inteſtine broils. In a convention of the ſtates, which was ſoon held, the queſtion about the vacancy of the throne, by Henry's deſertion of it, being debated; the moderate reſolution of ſending ambaſſadors into France, to require his ſpeedy return, was embraced; as the beſt expedient to ſuſpend contention. It was, however, determined, and expreſsly intimated to Henry, that, unleſs he appeared at Cracow, before the 12th of May, his excluſion from the crown ſhould take place. From the vanity of retaining this additional dignity, he uſed endeavours to ſoothe the Poles, with flattering propoſals; though he had not the leaſt inclination to comply with their requeſt. In this ſituation of affairs, the Queen-mother readily adopting the project of getting the crown transferred to the Duke of Anjou; Bellegarde and Pibrac were commiſſioned to attend the expected general diet of Poland, and to uſe all their arguments and intereſt to promote the deſign. But the intrigues of the court of France, however conducted, could not be ſuppoſed to operate, as they had done formerly,

on

* D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 22.

on the Poliſh nobles; who were highly diſguſted with Henry's retreat. Before theſe envoys * arrived, the parties in the diet, who urged an immediate declaration, either of an inter-reign, or of Henry's abdication, prevailed over their opponents. The ſenators and nobles, then, divided into two great factions; ſo nearly equal to each other, in number of ſuffrages, that a double election was made. One of them preferred Maximilian, the Emperor of Germany; and the other, Stephen Bathori, Prince of Tranſylvania. 1575. December.

It was, at this time, not without reaſon, judged that Maximilian, by proper conduct, might not only have increaſed the power of the houſe of Auſtria, with the temporary acquiſition of the Poliſh crown; but, perhaps, have tranſmitted it to his deſcendents. His pretenſions to a preference in the election were much favoured by the Pope; who inſiſted, that a ſtronger barrier would be formed againſt the Turk, by the advancement of the head of the Germanic body to the throne of Poland; and many of the nobles of that nation concurred with this political doctrine †. But, ſuch was Maximilian's natural tardineſs in the management of critical affairs, that he purſued not the advantage of this argument, and the opportunity he had to profit by it. In a buſineſs that required deciſion, and alert procedure, he objected to the *Pacta conventa;* being the ſtipulations uſually required of the Poliſh Kings; and, after interpoſing other delays, he propoſed to ſubſtitute his ſon, Ernheſt, in room of himſelf. In the mean time, Bathori, whoſe partizans had obliged him, for the ſake of acquiring more popularity, to promiſe to eſpouſe the Princeſs Anne, of the Jagellon family, ſhowed his reſolution and activity. Having come, with expedition, into Poland, he married that Princeſs; and, the moſt ample formula of the rights and liberties of the Poles being ſubſcribed by him, he got the nobles of his party, joined with many others, to ſolemnize his coronation at Cracow. 1576. May 1.

* Thuan. lib. 61. p. 62. † Ibid. lib. 62. p. 83. Matthieu, ibid. p. 416.

Book II.

Outſtripped by the meaſures of his rival, the Emperor ſought to avail himſelf of his intereſt with the princes of Germany, and his foreign allies; in order to maintain his title to a crown, which he appeared to have loſt by his dilatory and imprudent conduct. The protection afforded to Bathori, by the Ottoman Emperor, Amurath III. was inſiſted upon by him, as a plauſible argument with the Germanic body, and other Chriſtian powers, to join in ſupporting his claim, as a common cauſe. He was encouraged in his hopes of ſuch ſuccours, by the Grand Duke of Muſcovy offering his aſſiſtance to expell Bathori. Such a confederate war, now, ſeemed to be kindled about the Poliſh throne, as in later times has been frequently ſeen to embroil that elective monarchy; and the contending powers to be ranged, nearly in the ſame manner, as in the preſent age. But the death of Maximilian ſuppreſſed this riſing flame; which threatened a cataſtrophe, ſimilar to what has now befallen the Poliſh republic; while Henry III. though unable to form any party, in the late competition for its crown, refuſed always to reſign his acquired title of King of Poland.

Of the Netherlands.

In the Low Countries, the public diſſentions ſtill continued to rage with violence; while the provinces and cities of the union ſtruggled againſt the yoke of Spain, with almoſt unparalleled animoſity, and deſperate reſolution. After the ſiege of Harlem, in which the moſt

1573. ſtriking inſtances of the popular enmity to the Spaniards were ſeen; the Duke of Alva had reſigned his place and authority to a new governor, ſent by Philip II.; who was Lewis Requeſcenes, Commen-

Nov. 17. dator of Caſtile. His character was ſuch, as gave ſome reaſon to hope that an alteration of meaſures was intended by the council of Spain; and that methods of pacifying the commotions would be ſtudied, rather than the proſecution of a war; ſo ruinous to theſe commercial provinces, and unattended ſo long, with the expected

ſuc-

ſucceſs*. Philip's inſtructions were believed to correſpond with the moderation and prudence of the governor; who, by repreſſing the inſolencies of the ſoldiers in garriſon, and other equitable acts, early endeavoured to conciliate the affections of the people. But, grown ferocious, amidſt ſo much recent havock and ſlaughter, they appeared to make little account of this ſhew of lenity; and the ſtate of affairs being too much embroiled to admit of a ſpeedy remedy; Requeſcenes began to puſh on the military operations.

Though the victory gained over Lewis of Naſſau, with the German auxiliaries, ſeemed a deciſive blow to the army of the States; yet the reduction of Middleburgh, and ſome other places, by the Prince of Orange, joined to the enſuing mutiny of the Spaniſh troops, about the arrears of their pay, interrupted the farther ſucceſs of the governor. One expedient, which the repeated ſeditions of theſe bands obliged him to uſe, ſtrengthened the oppoſition of the diſaffected natives †. To reſtrain the devaſtations made by them, the townſmen and country-people were, generally, permitted to take arms; which they never after laid aſide, but became expert in the uſe of them. How invincibly reſolute they were, in preferring all hardſhips to ſubjection to the Spaniards, was evinced by their enduring the cloſe ſiege of Leyden, with more obſtinacy and better ſucceſs, than that of Harlem ‡. Undiſmayed with a blockade, that prevented all means of relief, and threatened the miſeries of famine; their anſwer, when ſummoned to ſurrender, was, "That they would cut off their left arms when deprived of all ſub-" ſiſtence, and feed upon them, and continue, with their right ones, to " fight for their liberty." After practiſing the various inventions that neceſſity had taught the people of Harlem, for ſaving their almoſt exhauſted proviſions, a reſolution, no leſs deſperate than the extre-

March. 1574.

June.

mities

* Strada de Bello Belgico, lib. 8. Thuan. lib. 62. † Ibid. ‡ D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 26.

Book II. 1576.

mities they ſuffered, was taken. They agreed to pierce the *dykes* and *banks*, which, conſtructed with vaſt induſtry and expence, ſheltered the country around from the inundations of the ſea, or the irruptions of the Rhine, and other great rivers. From near forty miles diſtance, ſhips with various ſtores were navigated through the deluge to the walls of Leyden. Upon this tranſmutation of the ſcene of action, ſtrange combats enſued, while the beſieging army was forced to retire before the ſea, or to raiſe forts above the level of the waters. Expoſed to diſtant ſhot from the ſhips, or to be dragged by the grappling irons of the mariners; the Spaniards were invironed with danger, and new engines of deſtruction. By ſuch unknown reſources of deſpair, the ſiege of Leyden was raiſed.

In the wars of the Netherlands, at this period, two circumſtances are remarkable. They repreſent the utmoſt military ſkill and valour of that age exerciſed by the Spaniards, who then were the foremoſt ſoldiers in Europe; and they likewiſe diſplay the ſurpriſing reſiſtence of a people addicted to commerce, and not to war; and who were chiefly animated to it by their hatred of foreign maſters. As the ſtubborn ſpirit of the Hollanders, when rouſed, reſembled that of the antient *Saguntines*, ſo the military diſcipline and bravery of the Spaniards may be compared with that of the Romans. In the enterpriſe upon Zealand, the difficulties and dangers encountered by the latter, equal any deſcription given of the hardy and invincible valour of the Legionary ſoldiers *. At low tide, they ventured to croſs, on foot, thoſe channels of the ſea, which, by many eddies and gulphs, were believed to be, at all times, impaſſable. Fifteen hundred of them, ſelected for this attempt, marched at midnight to explore their perilous path, while the armed veſſels of the enemy oppoſed their progreſs; and the return of the tide might have

* Strada, ibid.

have rendered any interruption of their courſe fatal to them: Theſe imminent dangers being braved by them, with the loſs of the greateſt part of their rear, they reached the ſhore, beat the enemy from their poſts, and ſoon poſſeſſed themſelves of the chief town in the iſland.

Upon the death of Requeſcenes, which happened ſuddenly, there was a great viciſſitude of meaſures and events. The commiſſion appointing Count Barlemont to ſucceed him in command was drawn up, but not ſubſcribed by him *. Its validity, on this account, being rejected, the Belgic ſenate, or great council, aſſumed the adminiſtration of civil and military affairs. The temporary converſion of the government of the Netherlands, into this relaxed form, was certainly moſt oppoſite to Philip's maxims of ſtate; but, being an accident, which, at firſt, he could not prevent, ſo the perplexity of his affairs did not permit him for ſome time to apply a remedy to it. He found himſelf obliged to grant a ratification of this ſupreme power exerciſed by the great council, from a perſuaſion, as ſome hiſtorians affirm, that the lenity of the meaſure would moderate the diſaffection of the intractable people, and that the Belgic Lords might be engaged by it to quell the public commotions. More probable, however, it ſeems, that the real motive of Philip's conduct was, his known averſion to nominate Don John of Auſtria, his natural brother, to the government of the Netherlands, which yet, from the Pope's ſolicitation, and other circumſtances, he found at laſt to be unavoidable †. The adopted expedient, like the correction of one extreme by another, produced factions in the council of ſtate, more general revolts of the troops, and new diſſentions amongſt the commanders of the garriſons. Upon the growth of theſe diſtractions, the combination of the ſtates for mu-

* Ibid. † Thuan. lib. 61. p. 87.

Book II. 1576. mutual defence became more extenſive through the Belgic dominions. By the Prince of Orange's aſſiduity in inflaming the general indignation at the mutinies and ravages of the Spaniſh ſoldiers,

Nov. 18. the famous league of Ghent was at length formed, for expelling all foreign troops out of the Netherlands. It comprehended not only the provinces of Holland and Zealand, but the majority of thoſe in Flanders. So important a revolution marked the period of Don John's acceſſion to the government of the Low Countries, and gave riſe to treaties of peace and wars alternately, which render it memorable.

Of Spain and its dominions. Beſides the commotions of the Belgic ſtates; Philip II. was obliged to attend to the preſervation of ſeveral forts and garriſons taken from the Moors, in Africa; after the famous battle of Lepanto. Tunis, the ſeat of antient Carthage, was the moſt important of them. From neglect to ſtrengthen its fortifications, it fell a prey

1574. to the Turks. The reduction of it, and other maritime places, encouraged them to undertake the protection of thoſe piratical cities; which, afterwards, became an inſuperable annoyance to the Mediterranean trade, and inſulted that of Chriſtendom. The factions and broils that aroſe, about this time, in the republic of Genoa, alſo much intereſted the Catholic King. They were carried to ſuch extremity as threatened its rotal ruin *. To terminate the diſſenſions of this petty ſtate, which was then the richeſt money-bank of Europe, Philip and other princes employed their negotiations and intereſt. A compromiſe being, at length, effectuated between the old and the new nobility, who contended for the ſuperiority; the *rota* or model of the ſtate was fixed upon that democratical baſis, which has continued to the preſent age. It is obſerved, that Philip, after the example of his father Charles V. had rendered the Genoeſe dependent upon him, by the great ſums he borrowed of the nobles at high intereſt. He now made a handle of the ſeditions of

* Thuan. lib. 61. p. 81.

1575.

of the republic, to diminiſh the debt he owed, by revoking the premiums he had engaged to pay to the bank. This procedure is ſaid to have gone near to have created ſuch a train of bankruptcies, as has been looked upon as the peculiar ſcourge of the preſent age. The bankers in Rome, Venice, Lyons, Antwerp, and many other mercantile towns in Germany and France were preſently affected by it; as all of them had mutual tranſactions, and great connection with the capital ſtocks of Genoa. To obviate the complaints of his creditors there, for the reducing of his intereſt from ſeven to four and a third, in the hundred; Philip thought it enough to publiſh an edict, authoriſing them to pay all thoſe, to whom they were indebted, in the ſame proportion. He either conſidered not, or had no concern for the grievous conſequences of his propoſal, which would extend the loſſes to thouſands, much leſs capable of ſupporting them, than the rich nobles of Genoa.

Affairs of England.

Notwithſtanding the Queen of England had always reaſon to ſuſpect the Catholic King's deſigns againſt her, and that no treaties of peace would bar his ſecret endeavours to diſturb the tranquillity of her reign, ſhe found it convenient, in the preſent ſtate of affairs, to diſſemble her apprehenſions, and to act conformably to the terms of concord ſubſiſting between the two crowns. To the application from him, for the reception of a fleet in the ports of England, deſtined for his ſervice in Holland, her anſwer was amicable: She alſo apparently complied with his ſolicitation, to grant no refuge in her dominions to the inſurgents in the Low Countries *. In the orders iſſued to the commanders of the ſea-ports, to ſuffer none of them to land in England, the Prince of Orange, and many of the principal nobles of his party, without reſerve or delicacy, were mentioned by name. Though, along with theſe teſtimonies of amity,

* Ibid. lib. 60. p. 50.

Book II. 1575.

amity, ſhe ſhowed heſitation, and uſed remonſtrances, it was rare that Elizabeth made ſuch public conceſſions to her natural enemies, without ſome political motive or equivalent. Upon this occaſion, it is obſerved that ſhe obtained, from the governor of the Netherlands, a declaration for expelling the Earl of Weſtmoreland, and the diſaffected Engliſh, from the Spaniſh provinces. Attentive to the commercial intereſt of her kingdom, ſhe likewiſe procured liberty for four Engliſh veſſels to trade through the Scheld, as far as to Antwerp. Yet, how much ſhe† conducted her preſent reſolutions with political caution and deference to Spain, was further manifeſt, from her declining to accept the offer of the confederate ſtates to put themſelves under her protection, and to yield her the ſovereignty of their provinces. Senſible that, beſides more inflaming the hatred of the Spaniards, ſhe would provoke the envy of the French; ſhe only took occaſion from it to make a merit of her refuſal, and to declare to the Spaniſh miniſter, that ſhe might, perhaps, be forced to a contrary conduct, unleſs ſome means were found to pacify the violent commotions about religion, and to prevent the confederates from throwing themſelves into the arms of France. At the ſame time, her meaſures with the latter ſtate appeared no leſs political §. By admitting the addreſſes of the Duke of Anjou, and flattering him with hopes of marriage with her, ſhe cooled the regard of the French court for the intereſt of the Queen of Scots, moderated the hatred of the Catholic malcontents in her own kingdom, and even rendered that party of the French nobles who attached themſelves to Anjou, her cordial friends and wellwiſhers.

September. Of the German empire.

In the empire, the deceaſe of Maximilian created no diſpute about the election of his ſucceſſor to the imperial dignity. By the previous ſuffrages of the diet of Ratiſbon, his eldeſt ſon, Rodolph, having been

† Camden's hiſtory of Elizabeth, Lond. edit. folio, b. 2. p. 210. § Ibid. p. 203.

been choſen King of the Romans, was quietly advanced to it. The ſtatutes in favour of religious toleration were too firmly eſtabliſhed in the Germanic body to be altered by the will of its Emperor, though Rodolph II. more weak and ſuperſtitious than his father, uſed ſome endeavours to reſtrain the liberty of the proteſtants in his Auſtrian dominions *. The death of Frederick, called the Great Count Palatine, who had been long the pillar of their party, had alſo little effect, either in weakening the intereſt of the proteſtant princes in the diets of the empire, or hindering them to ſend their mercenary bands abroad. Duke Caſimir, though a younger ſon, and not the heir of his electorate, was rich and powerful enough to ſupport his figure as a military chieftain, and to make his alliance be courted by ſeveral foreign ſtates. His preſent poſt with his army upon the frontier of France, was too advantageous to be quitted by him. Beſides the pretence of waiting the fulfilment of his capitulations with the court, the turbulent ſtate of the Low Countries afforded him the near proſpect of new employment in the field. In ſoliciting the execution of the late peace with the proteſtants, he was joined by other princes of Germany, and the Queen of England. In contraſt to them, the court of Spain, then only ſtirring in ſecret the conſpiracy of the violent catholics in France, complained, by her envoys, of ſeveral of its articles, and eſpecially of one, allowing the Rochellers to keep poſſeſſion of ſome Spaniſh prizes, taken by them at ſea during the late war.

Of Italy.

In Italy, beſides the broils of Genoa, few remarkable incidents enſued. One of them was the acquiſition of the title of *Grand Duke of Tuſcany* by the ſon of Coſmo de Medicis. As, in other inſtances of feudal rights and inveſtitures in Italy, the Pope and the Emperor generally contended together; ſo they diſputed which of them had the privilege of confirming this titular dignity. The firſt example of

 concluding

* D'Aubigné, lib. 3. chap. 21.

BOOK II. 1575.

concluding a peace with the Ottoman Emperor, Amarath III. being ſet by the Venetians, an embaſſy was ſent from them to the Pope and the King of Spain to apologize for it. Such muſt be the iſſue of all perpetual offenſive leagues: Some of the confederates will find it neceſſary, and therefore lawful, to break them. Tho' the Catholic King ſeemed as much as the Sovereign Pontiff to be offended with the Venetians, it was not long before he employed his agents to negotiate a truce with the grand adverſary of Chriſtendom. The growing power of the Belgic confederacy not only required him to bend more of his military force that way; but the opportunity of embroiling France, and his ſchemes of being revenged on England, were ſufficient to exerciſe his boundleſs luſt of ſway and dominion in Europe.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Cabals in Paris.—Origin of the Catholic League.—Manifeſto of the Partizans.—Conduct of the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé.—Aſſemblies of the firſt States of Blois.

TO conclude a peace with the proteſtants and their adherents was become, by a concurrence of circumſtances, a matter of much more delicacy than was apprehended by the court, or could be perceived from a ſuperficial obſervation of the ſtate of parties in France. In a reign, begun with the ſhew of fixed reſolution to ſubdue, by force of arms, the obnoxious party; the quick tranſition to a treaty with them, was conſidered either as a mark of the King's deficiency in catholic zeal, or of his unſteadineſs in the proſecution of his purpoſes. Viewed in any light, the conditions of the late peace ſeemed ignominious and inſufferable to the bigoted catholics. By the unprecedented tenor of them, the cauſe of the holy church, ſo long contended in the kingdom, was judged to be betrayed, or finally abandoned by the court. From the apparent triumph now yielded to the Hugonots, they anticipated in their minds the competition of theſe deteſted rivals with them for honour and preferment at court, and authority and intereſt in the provinces. The party rage and rancour diffuſed amongſt them, was manifeſted in the anſwers of the clergy and the Pariſians to the King's demand of money *; which were conceived in ſuch diſrepectful terms as had almoſt never been uſed to the throne. "You know, ſaid they, that a prince who exacts of his people more than is due to him, alienates their affections, and forfeits their good will, upon which depend the meaſure of their obedience."

* D'Aubigné, liv. 3. chap. 1.

Book II. 1576.

From an injudicious and blameable policy *, or from his own diſlike of the terms of peace, Henry thought it became him to teſtify no diſpleaſure at the complaints and invectives of the zealous catholics againſt it. He ſeemed willing that the conceſſions he had granted ſhould be aſcribed to his deſire of diſengaging his brother, Anjou, from the hated party, rather than to his own approbation of them. Inattentive, or regardleſs of the conſequence of having the moſt important act of his government openly and generally condemned, he increaſed the licenſe already taken by the factious, to vilify the meaſures of his adminiſtration, and to repreſent himſelf as more taken up with the gratification of his favourites, than concerned for his own honour, or the general intereſt and welfare of the realm. In a remiſs government, every order of the people ſoon perceives the ſlackened reins; and thoſe complaints and murmurs, which, at other times, are current among them without diſturbance, are then often found to be productive of private conſpiracies, or public commotions. What many of Henry's courtiers took the liberty to blame, the factious rehearſed with virulence and indignation.

Cabals of the diſaffected in Paris.

The ſeditious comments of the latter, upon the articles of the peace, being vented among the Pariſians, always irreconcilable enemies to the Hugonots †, ſecret cabals began to be held by them. To theſe meetings, beſides the turbulent, and thoſe of deſperate fortunes, ſome of the wealthier and more ſober citizens were induced to reſort, from its being inſinuated to them, that the King was miſled by affection to his brother. Unobſerved, or overlooked by the court; preſuming, with ſome reaſon, that their catholic zeal was not altogether diſapproved by it; theſe aſſociates proceeded to give ſome form to their ſecret combination, by reducing the ground of it to writing, and ſoliciting privately the ſubſcriptions of the citizens. The diſcovery of their dangerous practices was made by the Preſident

* Mem. de la Reine Marg. liv. 2 p 116. † Thuan. lib. 63. p. 104.

dent de Thou, to whom ſome of the citizens applied for a ſolution of their ſcruples about joining in the aſſociation. The interpoſition and arguments of this reſpectable and popular magiſtrate, prevailed, ſo far, againſt the credit and authority of the chief incendiaries, that, finding themſelves early detected, they broke up their mutinous aſſemblies.

Origin of the catholic league traced.

The origin of the famous *Catholic league*, which proved ſuch a phaenomenon in France, as was ſeen in no other kingdom, has been inveſtigated with much curioſity by the French hiſtorians. In the particular aſſociations of the catholics, in ſeveral provinces, and even amongſt ſome nobles at court, emblems of it had already appeared, during the courſe of the former wars; and it was plain, that the feuel of it had been, for a long time, collected in the bowels of the kingdom. But, as it now iſſued forth, all at once, in a time of public peace, and aſſumed directly that bold political form, which it never reſigned till its final overthrow; it is, with appearance of reaſon, ſuppoſed to have been planned and digeſted by ſome able and daring contrivers *. At this period, not only the rumour of a general league among the catholics was ſpread, but the ſcheme of it ſeemed to be propagated through many cities and provinces, and to be ſufficiently underſtood. The publication of the papers of the Advocate David, ſoon after this, tho' the authenticity of them ſhould not be admitted, affords a proof, that the ſtrange import and aim of the catholic league were well known. From theſe arguments, many of the hiſtorians have aſſigned ſome higher origin of the league than that of the intrigues of the catholics in Paris, or of the open and formal confederacy that ſoon followed them at Peronne. Though † no authentic act relative to it, but that of the latter, could be found, they have, without vouchers ‡, aſcribed the firſt device, and

* Mem. de la Reine Marguer. liv. 2. p. 117. † Henault abbregé chron. p. 353. and 344. ‡ Matthieu, liv. 7. p. 435. D'Avila, liv. 6. Thuan. lib. 63. p. 113.

Book II. 1576.

and inditement of it, to the Cardinal of Lorain, at the council of Trent; to the Jeſuites at Rome; and, more eſpecially, to the ſcroll of a treaty formed between Don John of Auſtria, and the Duke of Guiſe; from the diſcovery of which, it is ſaid, that Philip II. adopted it in his cabinet. All theſe vague conjectures ſhow, that the firſt political forgers of this memorable conſpiracy againſt the king and ſtate of France, could not be aſcertained. Without eſpouſing ſuch uncertainties, hiſtorical authority permits us to fix no other particular birth of it, than what appeared by the cabals of the partizans of the Duke of Guiſe, with the fanatical and the turbulent in Paris. Upon what political materials the former of them now proceeded, and who were their chief agents, cannot be determined. But, having long maintained a correſpondence with the bigoted Pariſians, it is moſt probable that, as has been related, they tried, among them, the firſt experiment of that maſter-piece of factious policy, the league; when the King's alledged neglect, or deſertion of the Catholic cauſe by the peace, could be turned to their advantage among the people.

The firſt open eruption of it at Peronne.

Though diſappointed in the metropolis, the fabricators of the league did not deſiſt from their project, but thought fit to change the ſcene of action to Peronne in Picardy. Several circumſtances pointed out this place as moſt favourable to their enterpriſe. It was the city aſſigned, by an article in the peace, for the Prince of Condé's reſidence, and as an earneſt of his promotion to the government of the province *. D' Humieres, a moſt powerful and popular nobleman, was governor of it, and known to be animated by perſonal diſguſt, beſides other motives, againſt the Prince's reception. The provincials, noted for peculiar iraſcibility, and petulance of temper, were fit to be thrown into a flame, eſpecially when rouſed

* Thuan. ibid. p. 105. Matthieu, ibid.

ſed with religious arguments. The effect ſhowed how juſtly they reckoned upon theſe advantages. D' Humieres, having declared his oppoſition, drew numbers of the nobility into confederacy with him. Perſuaded that the city of Peronne, under Condé's adminiſtration, would be rendered the refuge of heretics, the Picards, quickly, reſolved to prevent ſuch an inſult on the honour of the catholic ſanctuary among them. Not only was a general aſſociation formed to hinder the Prince's admiſſion into the province, but, aſpiring to a higher teſtimony of their zeal, they proceeded to bind themſelves, by a ſolemn engagement, to become voluntary guardians of the true Apoſtolic church; and to deliver it from all danger by ſecret or open adverſaries. Directed by able prompters, they exhibited to the public view the firſt ſketch of the *holy catholic league*; the ſource of a new and laſting combuſtion in the kingdom.

1576.

It was introduced with that ſolemn preamble, often profanely accommodated to human inventions: "In the name of the Holy "Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, our only true God, to "whom be glory and honour *." Its general compoſition ſhowed a mixture of religion and policy, ill connected together. The profeſſions of loyal obedience, and due ſubmiſſion to the King, were contraſted by obligations of unlimited devotion and adherence to the league. The ſervice of God and the church, was to be ſettled upon the primitive baſis; and the ſeveral orders of the kingdom were to be reinſtated in the privileges enjoyed by them in the reign of *Clovis*. Though nothing could be more indefinite and obſcure than theſe premiſſes, the ties of holy union were marked in the moſt preciſe and ſtrict terms. A chief or head of the confederacy was to be elected. All who refuſed to join themſelves to it, were to be accounted enemies, and treated as ſuch. Fortune, life, and

Manifeſto of the catholic league publiſhed.

* D'Aubigné, chap. 3. p. 834. D'Avila, ibid.

Book II. 1576.

and every thing dear, or valuable, were to be conſigned to the ſervice of the league. A power to puniſh apoſtates, and to determine controverſies, was declared to be inherent in the aſſociation, and its chief; and leave was to be obtained of the latter, for having recourſe to the ordinary magiſtrates. In taking the oath of union, they laid their hands on the goſpel, and ſwore conſtant adherence to it, under pain of excommunication from the church, and ſuffering its dreadful conſequences in a future ſtate.

Its ſpirit and tendency.

Such was the import and contexture of the Catholic league, which, to ſuperficial obſervers, might appear only an accidental eruption of diſcontent, joined with fanatical extravagance in a particular corner of the kingdom; yet its ſpirit and tendency, when attentively conſidered, might well be dreaded as ominous and peſtilential to the ſtate and nation. The party-rage, and enthuſiaſtic ſpirit of the violent catholics, that had long ſtrove to act without controul, was ſeen, by this effort, to ſurmount all reſtraint. Attracted to a center of union among themſelves, their confederacy was likely to increaſe, and a war with the Hugonots might be undertaken and proſecuted upon lawleſs motives, without regard to the determinations of the King and ſtate. In the place of loyalty, zeal for the league would become the general principle, and the allegiance ſworn to its head predominate above all other political ties. From its ſpreading quickly into Tourain and Anjou, the contagious influence of the league of Peronne was manifeſt. Supported by the turbulent ſpirit of the times, it could not fail to extend itſelf, and gradually, perhaps, acquire a power ſuperior to any other in the monarchy.

The ſituation and conduct of the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé.

The gates of Peronne being ſhut againſt the Prince of Condé by the votaries of the league, inſtead of a reſolution being taken conſiſtent with the honour of the King and the public faith, St Jean d'Angeli was only promiſed to him as an equivalent. The conſideration

deration of his ſatisfaction ſeemed of ſmall importance, compared with that of the weak and unſuitable behaviour of the court upon ſuch an emergency *. No reſentment was expreſſed againſt the league, nor any reſolution taken to reſtrain its progreſs. The edict of peace appeared to be reſigned to its fate, under the ſwell of faction and popular rage †. The Duke of Anjou, the procurer of it, no longer ſhewed himſelf concerned in its preſervation, but, having accompliſhed his ends, he ſeemed to ſpurn that party which he had rendered ſubſervient to them. In this aſpect of affairs, the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé, had juſt reaſon to conclude, that every proviſion made by the edict, for the toleration of the proteſtants, and their perſonal ſafety, was, in effect, diſannulled, or rendered inſignificant. Unſecure, under its unavailing ſanction, while a fanatical confederacy, in defiance of the King and government, roſe in arms, to overturn it; they had the ſtrongeſt inducement to guard againſt this imminent danger. The maintenance of the public peace being, in vain, implored of the King, it appeared neceſſary, that other meaſures of defence ſhould be purſued by them.

While the lawleſs aſſociations proceeded, in various places; theſe two princes believed themſelves warranted, from their rank in the ſtate, to oppoſe ſo flagrant an inſult on the King's authority, and the violent ſubverſion of a public edict; on the ſubſiſtence of which, their own ſafety, and that of their partizans, and the general peace of the kingdom depended. In proſecuting this reſolution, they had various difficulties to encounter; while the part they acted, however honourable, expoſed them to the imputation of having detached themſelves from the court, to become the leaders of party. In their procedure, the different characters of the princes might be diſcerned ‡. A ſenſe of dignity, of honour, and reputation, diſtinguiſhed

 the

* Matthieu, p. 147. † Memoires de la ligue, quart. edit. a Amſterdam, tom. 1. p. 540. ‡ Matthieu, D'Avila, ibid.

Book I. 1567.

the conduct of the King of Navarre: Leſs regard to decorum, more impetuoſity and diſdain of his adverſaries, were obſervable in the Prince of Condé. Apprehending he might be excluded from St. Jean d' Angeli, the latter, privately, introduced a party of his adherents into the town, and made himſelf maſter of it. His daring ſpirit alarmed the Rochellers, and made them ſuſpicious of his aſſuming too much authority amongſt them. Though more a ſtranger to the proteſtant ſect, and unaccuſtomed to their prejudices, and to the manners of a popular community, ſuch as Rochelle; the King of Navarre, by a moderation of temper natural to him, by ingenuity and frankneſs of deportment, ſoon rendered himſelf a favourite with them. He obtained peaceable acceſs to ſeveral towns in Guienne, where he appeared in his quality of governor. But, his renunciation of the maſs, and his return to the proteſtant profeſſion, made Bourdeaux, and other places, decline his authority. In a ſhort time, the rage againſt the proteſtants being awaked by the ſpreading leagues, arms were taken up in that province, and in others adjacent to it.

Inſtitution of new orders of monks by Henry.

Henry's inſtitution of new fraternities of monks, at this period, deſerves to be remarked, ſince their increaſe was juſtly complained of as an addition to the public grievance, already felt from them *. They would alſo contribute to ſtimulate that ſpirit of fanaticiſm, which was ſo advantageous to the partizans of the league. The ſeditious tone of the mendicant preachers teſtified the propenſity of theſe political devotees to inflame the diſtractions of the kingdom. Henry had various informations given him, of the induſtry uſed by the fanatical party, and of their ſolicitation of ſupport from the courts of Rome and Spain. He was preſented with a ſpecial one, in the memoirs of Nicholas David, publiſhed by the proteſtants †. Suſpected

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 4.

† Memoires de la ligue, tom. 1. p. 3.

Suſpected as they were, for being the forgery of the latter, againſt their violent adverſaries, it was ſurpriſing to find ſo exact a copy given, at this time, of the principles diſſeminated amongſt the adherents of the league, and ſuch a deduction of the treaſonable deſigns and views, which they afterwards purſued. In them, the Duke of Guiſe was pointed out as the intended head of the league; and the merit of the Lorain family, deſcended of Charlemagne, was extolled, while the Capetian race, the King's predeceſſors, were declared adverſaries to the holy ſee, and ſubjected to the malediction of heaven. The King, however, appeared to take no other courſe for ſuppreſſing the outrageous confederacies, but that of the propoſed convention of the ſtates-general. The provincial meetings for the election of the deputies being held in September, their aſſembly was opened at Blois, in the laſt month of the year.

1576.

December.

When hiſtory records the tranſactions and conduct of a national aſſembly, ſuch as that of the ſtates of France, now to be the ſubject of narrative; it almoſt always merits attention, and is, often, worthy of a particular detail. Not only the importance of the matters under deliberation, but the judgement and procedure of men of the firſt rank in the community on ſuch points of national intereſt, renders the ſubject, in ſome meaſure, inſtructive. Even where we have reaſon to animadvert on the narrowneſs of their knowledge, and their miſtaken views of policy, we muſt obſerve the ſlow and gradual improvements of civil government: When actuated by prejudice or paſſion, ſwayed by private motives, or the intrigues of party, they appear to forget, or to renounce their public ſphere of action; we may conclude that bodies of men, generally in every age and country, ſimilar to one another, will, in like ſituations, diſcover a tincture of the ſame defects and corruptions.

Aſſembly of the firſt ſtates at Blois,

Book I.

1576.

December 7. opened with a ſpeech by the King.

The ſpeech, with which the King opened the meeting of the ſtates, may be reckoned the beſt example of the French eloquence in that age *. His addreſs was naturally graceful; and, whether from his own better taſte, or the conciſer form of an oration from the throne, the metaphorical ornaments, and other redundancies, then falſely admired, were excluded from it. The topics inſiſted upon were proper and pathetic. Having touched on the flouriſhing ſtate of France, in the reigns of his father and grand-ſire, and feelingly deplored the change that had ſince enſued, he expreſſed, in lively terms, his earneſt wiſhes to fulfil the proper duties of a ſovereign, and to reſtore order and dignity to the ſtate, and felicity to his people. After a ſhort, and erroneous experiment of violence, in the affair of religion, he declared his conviction, that the diſorders and calamities of the kingdom could only be repaired by peace. He then conjured them, by their loyalty and affection to him, by their love and benevolence to their country, to their families, and their poſterity, to concur with his intentions; and, diveſting themſelves of prejudice and paſſion, to join their conſultations, and ſuffrages, for promoting the general benefit of the realm.

Notwithſtanding the three orders appeared to have the moſt natural inducements to temperate deliberations, and the embracing the meaſures of peace recommended by the King, a † different report had prevailed, with reſpect to the diſpoſition of the deputies. The proteſtants, eſpecially, complained loudly of undue influence being uſed in their elections, and made it one ſpecial reaſon for their abſenting from the aſſembly at Blois, and of their proteſtation againſt the validity of its deciſions. Tho' difregarded, this charge appeared by no means to be groundleſs. The court found, immediately, that they had to deal with a body of men who had received the impreſſions

* Matthieu, liv. 7. p. 439.

† D'Aubigné, liv. 3. chap. 4.

1576. The deputies diſcover their factious diſpoſition.

preſſions of the factious. It is likely that the King's ſpeech, in favour of peace, had excited them to teſtify their zealous oppoſition to his purpoſes, when, the next day, without any other motion, or debate leading to it, they made a moſt extraordinary requeſt to the throne*. They deſired, for the expeditious diſcuſſion of affairs, that a ſovereign council ſhould be appointed, comprehending twelve of their deputies, and a certain number of delegates nominated by the King; and that their deciſions, being unanimous, ſhould have the full authority and force of ordinances, in the kingdom. By this ſtrange and undigeſted propoſition, which derogated, equally, from the royal prerogative, and the conſtitution of the ſtates, they manifeſted their preſumptuous and headlong ambition, to over-rule the King's council, and new-model the ſtate. While they graſped at the partial exerciſe of ſovereign authority, to the diſhonour of the King and crown, it was plain, that the ſtates miſtook the method of advancing their power, and expoſed their privileges, as a collective body, to annihilation. Such ſhallow politicians have the pretenders to patriotiſm and the ſpirit of liberty, ſometimes, proved themſelves! And ſuch have, often, been the abſurd and inconſiſtent ſchemes adopted in the violence and impetuoſity of faction; when its leaders had only ſome narrow, or ſelfiſh, object in their view!

Henry and his council, regarding more the indignity and inſolence of this demand, than the advantage that might have been taken of it †, replied to the ſtates, That they ſhould have every reaſonable ſatisfaction from him: That their delegates might have acceſs to plead for their requeſts, before his council; and, That he was willing to publiſh the liſt of its members. But his refuſal of the legiſlative council was poſitive; and he declared it incongruous, and unworthy

* Thuan. lib. 63. p. 110.

† Ibid.

BOOK I. 1576.

worthy of him, to lend his ſovereign authority to any ſuch body in the ſtate, or to ratify ordinances, without having the cognizance of them.

The King endeavours to ſooth the zealous party;

Finding the factious impulſe of the ſtates, from this unprecedented motion, Henry thought it would be beſt diſſipated by the ſtrongeſt profeſſions of that religious zeal, from which he had reaſon to believe it took its riſe. He reſolved, not only to aſſent to the deſired act of *catholic re-union*, as it was termed, but to ſhow himſelf

January 1.

no leſs forward in promoting it, than the moſt violent. It was an edition of the holy league of the catholics, thrown into a form, more compatible with the ſafety of the crown and ſtate. It implied the obligation of all the ſubjects of the monarchy, to acknowledge the

by an act for catholic union;

uniform ſtandard of the catholic faith; and to exert themſelves earneſtly for the ſole eſtabliſhment of it in the kingdom *. But, conſidered as a neceſſary expedient by the King, and a ſalutary act of zeal by the ſtates; the conſequence it inferred, of a war with the Hugonots, was not openly ſtated at firſt by the parties. A circumſtance, upon this point, deſerves notice, as it ſhows the abuſes incident to popular councils, when the reſult of their deliberations is left to the verbal explication of their prolocutors. In the ſeparate conſultations of the order of the commons, it was moved and carried, that the act of catholic union ſhould paſs, in the ſtates, with the expreſs proviſion of its being made effectual without war, or the perturbation of the ſtate. A ſubſequent debate, upon this, enſuing without any deciſion, Verſoris, a famous advocate, who was their ſpeaker in the aſſembly of the ſtates, without regard to this ambiguity, followed the tone of the two orators of the clergy and nobles; and concluded his ſpeech, as they did, in general terms, for approving the ſtatute of union. Without this unanimity of the three orders,

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 6. Thuan. p. 115.

ders, which was falſely repreſented, the act muſt have remained in ſuſpenſe.

The bounds of zeal are never fixed; and one act of it leads on, or obliges to another. After ratifying the act of re-union, it became manifeſt to Henry, that a handle would be made of it, by the factious, to authoriſe the confederacies, and promote their violent purpoſes *. They left him no room for the leaſt doubt, with regard to this. The catholic leagues were ſpoken of, by them, as connected with the determination of the ſtates; and the inference from it, of perpetual war with the proteſtants, was no longer diſſembled †. It appeared to him, that the deſtined chief of the particular leagues, might be rendered the head of this general union; and, that the only expedient he could uſe to prevent this, was, to aſſume himſelf this popular name. Upon mature conſideration, however, it ſeemed, by no means, an eligible meaſure, that he, the ſovereign of a regular monarchy, ſhould embrace a device dictated by policy to the partizans of faction. Neither did the patronage of ſuch an engine of ſedition and anarchy well conſiſt with the ſafety of the throne, or ſtate. The dilemma, in which he was entangled, was evident; and it perplexed him one way the more, that he would be forced, againſt his declared reſolution, to rekindle the flame of civil war, after being already wearied of it. Before he could determine himſelf, he required the ſigned opinions of all the members of his council ‡. De Thou declares, that he had, in his hands, for ſome time, the original papers ſubſcribed by them. The ſequel of the hiſtory will ſhow, how far their advice redounded to the dignity of the King, and the benefit of the ſtate, when they approved his declaring himſelf head of the catholic union. Viwed as a temporary expedient, it may be reckoned to have diſconcerted the preſent ambitious projects

Henry doubtful of the effect of the ſtatute;

reſolves to declare himſelf head of the catholic union.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 417. Thuan. p. 114.

† Mem. de la Reigne, Marg. liv. 2. p. 119.

‡ Ibid.

Book I.

1577.

projects of the Duke of Guiſe, and, for ſome time after, to have repreſſed them. It diſcovered, however, that the King was forced, by his adverſaries, to a refuge that he did not approve, and which, in itſelf, was rather diſhonourable, and diſadvantageous to him. The formulary of the act being firſt ſigned and ſworn to by the King, and, after him, by the nobles of his court, was tranſmitted to the cities and provinces, for its general reception in the kingdom.

Commiſſioners are ſent, from the ſtates, to the two princes.

Henry, having thus taken up the ground of his opponents, proceeded with ſome reluctance, and timidity, in it. Since the diſagreeable reſolution for war was formed, he propoſed that ſome commiſſioners ſhould be ſent, from the ſtates, to the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and the Marſhal Damville, to exhort them, before force was uſed, to ſubmit to his royal will, and that of the ſtates; by being reconciled to the catholic church. After ſome debate, this was agreed to by the aſſembly; and the deputies from it went to execute their commiſſion *. In the replies made by the confederates, there was ſomething characteriſtical of each of them. Thoſe of the Marſhal Damville, and the King of Navarre, deſerve to be inſerted. In the letter of the former to the ſtates, he obſerved, how falſe the general aſſertion was, that the two religions were incompatible under one government. "Is not the contrary manifeſt, ſaid he, from what is ſeen, almoſt every where, in the wide province of Languedoc, where the catholics and hugonots, blended together in the ſame cities, houſes, and families, live with one another, in all the habits of civil and ſocial intercourſe?" The King of Navarre's anſwer, to the letter of the ſtates, was conceived in the moſt moderate and prudent terms; and his verbal inſtructions, when repeated by the envoys, ſerved to abate the indignation expreſſed by the violent catholics, at his refuſal of an abſolute ſubmiſſion to their will.

"I muſt

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 8. Matthieu, p. 440.

1577.

"I muſt be allowed, ſaid he, to hold, in the embraces of faith and integrity, that religion in which I have been educated, until rational conviction, to which my mind is open, has taught me wherein my belief errs; yet, were even this religious alienation to be accounted a prejudice, I labour under it, with ſincere and tender regard for the honour of God, and unimpaired affection to the ſervice of the King, and the welfare of the ſtate." The reſolution, and ſteadineſs, of the three aſſociates, were ſufficiently apparent from their anſwers.

February 18.

Conteſts in the ſtates multiply.

Upon the proſpect of war with the proteſtants, a new debate with reſpect to the ſubſidies enſued. Bellievre's propoſal to alienate part of the King's *demeſnes*, was oppoſed by Bodin, deputy of the commons for the Vermandois, a man of parts and erudition, who had argued ſtrenuouſly for peace *. In the courſe of the argument, the general queſtion, about peace, or war, was reſumed; and the original one, about limiting the number of the King's council, and joining to it twelve delegates of the ſtates, was again introduced. It appears that Henry, better inſtructed in the political conſequence of this laſt propoſal, thought now of turning it to his advantage. But Bodin, more acute than the bulk of his colleagues, ſhowed, at large, how inconſiſtent it was, with every idea of the conſtitution of the ſtates, to inveſt with the legiſlative powers of their body, conſiſting of above four hundred members, a petty committee of twelve deputies, liable, as they were, to be ſwayed by the influence of the court, and to be made tools of its deſpotic power. The ſeveral orders of the ſtates were convinced, with ſhame, of the abſurdity of their propoſal; which, having iſſued from the violence of party, and blind oppoſition to the court, was now totally rejected by them.

The concluſive ſcene of the ſtates was no leſs remarkable for debate, and the agitation of parties. The return of the Duke of

* D'Aubigné, chap. vii.

BOOK I.

1577.

Monpenſier, from performing a particular commiſſion he had received from Henry, to confer with the King of Navarre, contributed to quicken them in a high degree *. His report of that Prince's deep regret of the civil diſtractions, his own arguments in favour of peace, delivered with the gravity becoming his age, ſtruck the whole aſſembly. His ſtaunch catholic zeal being ſo well known, this abatement of it, before the ſtates, appeared to be ſomewhat miraculous. Encouraged by his appearance, and ſpeech, the deputies of the commons, who dreaded the pecuniary exactions for the war, and, eſpecially Bodin, and his party among them, redoubled their arguments againſt it. In vain did the diſſentients from them, in their ſeparate aſſembly, inſiſt, that they brought into controverſy a point already concluded †. Bodin appealed to the record of their meeting, when Verſoris, their ſpeaker before the ſtates, received his inſtructions, for proof that the re-union voted by them had the proviſional clauſe of its being effectuated without war. He argued from legal forms, as well as from the principles of reaſon and juſtice, that a procedure, on a falſe or miſtaken fact, ought to be rectified. Aſſiſted by the Preſident Æmar of Bourdeaux, and ſome others, this patriot, at length, carried his point; but, to obtain a plurality of votes, they were, unuſually, reckoned, not by the ſuffrages of the deputies, but of the provinces. The corrected ſupplication of the commons was, however, preſented to the King; which, on account of the requiſite unanimity of the three orders to the eſtabliſhment of any ordinance, rendered invalid, or ambiguous, the determination of the ſtates, upon the grand queſtion about war or peace.

February 27. Their general reſolution is rendered dubious.

March.

Such was the procedure and concluſion of this national aſſembly, called the firſt ſtates of Blois; which, affording ſuch a picture of faction, joined with intereſting debate, ſeems more worthy of particular

Reflexions on the procedure of the ſtates.

* Ibid. chap. 8. † Thuan. ibid. p. 129.

1577.

cular attention, than many ordinary paſſages of hiſtory. That the election of the deputies had been ſwayed by the emiſſaries of the Guiſes, and the bigotted party, was evident from the turbulent motions made by them; and, eſpecially, from their fabricating that idol of fanatical zeal, the act of catholic re-union. Ever ſince the queſtion about religious toleration had been canvaſſed, no ſuch determination had proceeded from the ſtates. But it was intended to overturn, by their authority, all former edicts of pacification, and to renew the original antipathies of the religious parties in the kingdom. The Guiſes failed not, afterwards, upon every occaſion, to plead the ſanction it gave, to perpetual war with the hugonots, and to make it their conſtant argument for embroiling the ſtate. It was, alſo, unfortunate, that the King thought himſelf obliged, in policy, to vow adherence to it. His conduct was ſtraitened by it, when, from the imminent danger of the ſtate, contrary counſels became neceſſary to be followed by him.

Regulations and ſtatutes, political and civil, framed by them.

The recapitulation of the political and civil acts and ſtatutes, paſſed in ſuch a national council, alſo belongs to the review of the procedure of the ſtates. Upon this material part of hiſtory, the curſory manner, or negligence, of moſt hiſtorians, often diſappoints the curious and inquiſitive; and grants, perhaps, a deſireable relief from attention to the ſuperficial and indifferent. Though chiefly engaged in the manifeſtation of their religious zeal, it appears, that the ſtates of Blois had paſſed a number of ordinances and ſtatutes; or, to expreſs it more properly, according to the ſtile of the kingdom, had requeſted the King, that their acts ſhould be framed into royal edicts, and publiſhed by him. It was a material deficiency in the conſtitution, and the forms of the ſtates, that their requeſts or acts did not always immediately receive the King's aſſent, and the ſanction of his authority to them. They lay over, for the review of his Majeſty, and were often not collected, and drawn out in form, till

Book I. 1577.

after the concluſion of the ſtates. This circumſtance, alone, would give occaſion, not only for delays of their publication, but for important omiſſions, and variations being made in them, by the King's council *. A motion, however, is ſaid, by de Thou, to have been carried in the ſtates of Blois, for the preſent confirmation of their ordinances by the King. But, as the effect of it is not mentioned by him, it is likely, that it had been diverted, by the King's promiſe of compliance; and that, having reſpect only to his preſent procedure, it could prove no remedy againſt the general grievance complained of by the ſtates.

Their ſchemes about the revenue.

A new ſcheme, about the royal revenues, was likewiſe canvaſſed in the ſtates of Blois. It was propoſed to aboliſh † all the antient taxes, and to ſubſtitute, in their place, a money-rate upon every hearth; the higheſt, not exceeding fifty livres, and the loweſt, being reckoned at twelve ſous. It was computed, that fifteen millions of livres would be, annually, produced by this ſyſtem of the revenue. But the ſtates, afraid of ſuch a project, which would unhinge all the ſecurities of the government, and throw the creditors of the crown upon its uncertain iſſue, would not be caught in this labyrinth of Henry's bold financiers. Like all the antient Gothic parliaments, in every country, they ſhowed themſelves extremely parſimonious in the grant of ſubſidies. Notwithſtanding their favourite requeſt, for the catholic re-union, furniſhed a ſtrong argument for liberality, the third eſtate would not agree to the conceſſion of two millions of livres. After many evaſions, the diſagreeable burden was thrown upon the city of Paris, and the clergy.

By one declaration, publiſhed by the King, with the approbation of the ſtates, the honour of the crown, and the blood-royal, was ſup-

* Thuan. ibid. 115.

† D'Aubigné, chap. vii. Thuan. ibid.

1577.

ſupported *. It was determined, that the princes of the blood, whether they were peers or not, or inveſted with peerages of an erection poſterior to others, ſhould precede, in every caſe of rank, all peers of the realm; and that their own precedency ſhould be regulated by their proximity to the crown. The Preſident de Thou, who remembered how this point had been controverted by the Guiſes, told Henry, that, ſince the reign of Philip de Valois, he knew of no better ſupport given to the *Salic* law. The Chancellor Birague, an Italian, who could hardly well expreſs himſelf in French, underſtood too little of the laws, or the forms of juſtice, to propoſe amendments of them. But the motion, to promulgate the decrees of the council of Trent, was not forgotten; nor the requeſt of the prelates for reſtoring the former elections to benefices. Neither of them, however, ſucceeded. Bodin, the patriotic deputy, ſupplied the defects of the chancellor, by ſome civil regulations in the ſtates. As forgeries of deeds and contracts were frequent, it was enacted, that all written deeds ſhould bear the date of the day of the month, and of the time of the day, whether before or after noon, under the hands of the clerks and notaries.

The ſpeakers for each of the three orders in the ſtates of Blois were, the Archbiſhop of Lyons, the Baron de Seneſcai, and the Advocate Verſoris. The forms of the aſſembly were the ſame, as on former occaſions. It is only obſerved †, that Henry, whoſe, temper, and notions of policy, led him, rigidly, to maintain the honorary diſtinctions of the ſtate, allowed the ſpeaker for the commons, Verſoris, to remain upon his knees during the whole time of his harangue, which laſted for an hour and a half.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 114. Henault. p. 354.

† D'Aubigné, liv. 3. chap. 6.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Edict reſtrictive of Toleration.——Comparative View of the military Strength of the Proteſtants.——The King of Navarre's Magnanimity and martial Spirit.——Pacification of Poictiers.——Political Refinements, and devout Proceſſions of Henry III.——Military Exploits contraſted with Gallantry.——Singular Inſtance of Queen Catherine's Diſſimulation.

BOOK I. 1577.

IT now belonged to Henry, and his council, to determine what was the import of the act of catholic re-union, and in what manner it became him to execute it. To read it as a declaration of war againſt the proteſtants, was the more diſagreeable to him, as Duke Caſimir, the armed guarantee of the late treaty of peace, ſtill remained near the borders of the kingdom, and, menacingly, demanded ſatisfaction of his high pecuniary claims. To appeaſe, him, for the preſent, and, if poſſible, to reconcile him to what might be the King's reſolution*; ſome envoys were ſent from the court, to wait upon this haughty Prince. It appears, that the pleaſure and pride of talking to the envoys of France, in the ſtile of a dictator, about war or peace, contributed ſo far to ſooth him, that he was willing to allow of ſome abatements of the ſtipulations of the King's edict, and even to refer to Henry's honour the account and diſcharge of his arrears. Since Caſimir ſtood ſo much on the point of honour, while the argument about the toleration of the proteſtants in France was canvaſſed before him, and other princes of Germany, it ſeemed a reflection on the honour of Henry, and his court, to ſlight the conſideration of the religious and civil tye of his own edict. Without regard to the ambiguous act of the ſtates of Blois, it appeared, in itſelf,

Henry uncertain how to execute the decree of the ſtates.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 442. Thuan. . 122.

1577.

ſelf, to have an indefeaſible obligation, which it was not eaſy, upon any principles of caſuiſtry, to elude.

But how much the maxims of religion and morality were warped to the fanaticiſm of the times, the writings publiſhed by the eſtabliſhed clergy, on the ſubject of the edict, bore teſtimony *. They delivered it as an orthodox tenet, that the King was not obliged to keep faith with ſchiſmatics; and they confirmed it, by the practice of the council of Conſtance. Their argument, for unity of faith, was ſhort and deciſive, according to their elements of ſcholaſtic theology. "There is one true church, ſaid they, and one religious profeſſion: The principle, that would make more of the firſt, and vary from the ſecond, muſt be both falſe and ſchiſmatical." They added, with more unction, but equal charity, "That the nation could never be at reſt, while its rulers preferred a temporal peace to a ſpiritual one, and human policy to the glory of God." So intrenched ſtill were theſe divines within the carved works of their ſanctuary, and ſo much diſpoſed to inflame and perpetuate the diſſenſions of the kingdom!

When Henry, and his council, omitting the point of faith and honour, came to conſider the queſtion about war or peace, altogether in a political light, its deciſion appeared ſufficiently perplexing. Beſides his own apprehenſions of the conſequences of renewing the civil commotions, the King had been admoniſhed, in a conference he held with the Preſident de Thou †, that the adverſaries of his government wiſhed for no greater advantage, than that which a new war, on their own principles, would give them. The political remedy, of his declaring himſelf head of the league, was ſhown to be rather productive of the evils he feared; and his further com-

* Thuan. ibid. p. 123.

†. Ibid. p. 122.

Book I.

1577.

compliance, with the ſpirit of faction, was proved to be a dangerous licence, and encouragement of its rage. Henry's counſellors were divided upon the point of expediency; and, though by no means favourable to the proteſtants, the majority of them, in dread of the Duke of Guiſe's faction, at laſt voted for peace, or a treaty of accommodation. This laſt meaſure was, accordingly, reſolved on; and de Biron went with freſh propoſals to the King of Navarre. But the King, in the mean time, revolving the whole circumſtances of things in his mind, fixed on the ſcheme of an edict, which he thought moſt accommodated to the conjuncture. "It comprehended a toleration of the proteſtants, and the grant of all legal protection to them, without allowing the public exerciſe of their religion." It is probable that the ſame motive, which induced Henry to aſſume the title of head of the league, alſo influenced him in this reſolution. As he firſt apprehended that the Duke of Guiſe, under this name, would become the popular idol; ſo, now, he feared that, if the act of re-union were not proſecuted, in ſome ſhape, and the proteſtants menaced with hoſtilities, the civil war would be carried on by the factious confederacies, without his concurrence *. Having, beſides, as Matthieu obſerves, gone ſuch lengths, at the ſtates, in approving the re-union, that he could not, with any propriety, at once recede from his engagements, he determined, upon this plan, to perform them. To ſhow himſelf the more in earneſt, and, perhaps, with a ſecret view to controul the armed bands of the league, he iſſued his orders for aſſembling his troops. Having appointed the diviſion of them into two bodies, he aſſigned the command of one of them to his brother Anjou, and, of the other, to the Duke of Mayenne. By the nomination of the latter, he avoided all reflections from the violent catholics; and, at the ſame time, according to his own wiſhes, he ſhunned employing ſuch a ſuſpected commander as the Duke of Guiſe.

An edict tolerating the proteſtants, but reſtraining their public worſhip, is publiſhed by Henry;

and two armies muſtered to enforce it.

The

* Ibid. p. 447.

The proteſtants, againſt whom theſe warlike preparations were made, when conſidered in their military capacity, differed much from what the former hiſtory of the civil wars repreſents them to have been. Though equally numerous, and in poſſeſſion of ſeveral fortified towns, they had not the ſame union, as a body, nor like forwardneſs to riſe in arms. Various circumſtances had contributed to this change. Their renowned chiefs, in the preceeding conteſts, being now no more, they had accuſtomed themſelves to ſeek ſecurity, in partial aſſociations, among themſelves, or in the provinces of their chief ſtrength, by particular treaties with the catholic governors. The Marſhal Damville's management in Languedoc, where ſuch compromiſes with them were, for a conſiderable period, maintained, had diſjoined a great party of them from the reſt, and much abated their propenſity to civil broils. To the generality of them, the perſons and characters of the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé, were, in a great meaſure, unknown. Young as they were, and but lately detached from the court, they were ſuſpected to act, more from private diſguſt, or ambition, than from real concern for the general intereſt of the proteſtants. Hence, at this juncture, and for ſome time after it, we need not admire what Sully * often regrets, that the proteſtants were neither united, animated, nor prepared, to vindicate the new and extenſive privileges granted them by the late edict of peace; which, in reality, had not been enjoyed by them.

Condition of the proteſtants different from that of the preceeding wars.

But, though the military force of the proteſtants was deranged, and could not be put in motion by the King of Navarre, upon his recent reſort to them, and though the Marſhal Damville acted upon a ſyſtem of his own, and could not be drawn from his cantonment in Languedoc, the early diſcoveries of magnanimity and honourable conduct given by that Prince were ſuch, that a conſiderable party

* Mem. oct. edit. liv, 1.

Book I. 1577.

ſoon became attached to him. More gallant than numerous, they conſiſted both of proteſtant and catholic officers and ſoldiers, who were fond of honour in the field, and of military preferment; and regarded theſe objects, independent of religious diſtinctions, as worthy of their conſtant purſuit. The latter of theſe partizans had no reaſon to be alarmed at Henry's late change of his profeſſion, while his behaviour ſhewed him to be poſſeſſed of that moderation and prudence which had recommended his character to them. But to engage obedience, which, in the chiefs of both parties, was voluntary, to maintain ſubordination, which could not be commanded, and to repreſs irregular conteſts for precedency, and ſuch jealouſies as might ariſe among them on account of religion, was the difficult taſk which Henry had to perform on his firſt appearance at the head of his adherents. From Sully and D'Aubigné * ſeveral inſtances might be given of the prevalence of ſuch animoſities, and diſſentions among them, which tended to the obſtruction and prejudice of their military affairs. But let it ſuffice to obſerve, that this Prince had ſuch endowments as enabled him to leſſen thoſe diſadvantages, and to render thoſe haughty chieftains, not only tractable to his ſervice, but ambitious of diſtinguiſhing themſelves in it.

Union among them, and military ſubordination, chiefly promoted by the King of Navarre.

When the force of every tye to ſubordination, and regular obedience, was weakened, martial ſpirit and bravery had powerful influence; and, when exerted in a high degree, acquired reſpect and authority among the warlike chiefs of that period. Joining to his regal title, and that of firſt Prince of the blood of France, the moſt ſingular traits of a heroic character, Henry ſoon roſe to the dignity of an eſteemed commander in the field; and by dint of reputation ſupported his authority. Equal to the oldeſt warriors, in fearleſs reſo-

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 1. D'Aubigné, chap. 14.

reſolution, in readineſs to confront dangers, and in military vigilance and activity, he was looked upon as a pattern to all the young officers who thirſted for honour in the field; and his ſervice was ſoon accounted the beſt ſchool of it. Though, in this commencement of his military name and fortune, narrow enterpriſes were only ſuited to his ſtrength; ſeveral of them were rendered moſt remarkable, for the amazing proofs of valour and fortitude given by Henry and his followers. Such was the attack of Marmande, and the ſurprize of the town of Eauſe; where, as Sully * obſerves, the ſcarlet cloke, and white plume, worn by Henry, were already ſo well known as to be aimed at by the enemy. But, as the generality of theſe exploits, though more dangerous to the brave, than regular campaigns, and pitched battles, proceeded on no fixed plan; a particular account of them is unneceſſary. With regard to the effect of them, it may be obſerved that, by managing his inferior power, and undertaking only the ſurprizes and aſſaults of ſuch places as might be reduced by the proper exertion of it, the King of Navarre created a diverſion to the catholic forces, upon the ſide of Gaſcony, which raiſed the admiration of his enemies, and gave room to conclude what his valour and conduct might be able to atchieve, with the more united forces of the proteſtants.

His early military enterpriſes.

In Guienne and Xaintonge, where the Prince of Condé inſtigated the warlike commotions of the chief towns poſſeſſed by the proteſtants, the ſcene of hoſtilities, gradually, became more extenſive †. At firſt, the Rochellers, evading all his arguments to take part in the war, were more diſpoſed to complain of the licentiouſneſs of his troops, in their neighbourhood, than to engage in it with alacrity, till the appearance of Lanſac's fleet on their coaſt, and the advancement of the Duke of Mayenne's army, threw them into conſterna-

* Ibid.

† Thuan. lib. 64. p. 126.

Book I. 1577.

ſternation. Preparations were then made by them, to ſuccour the important fort of Brouage, aſſaulted by the latter of theſe commanders. But their naval armament, and their land-forces, raiſed with too much confuſion, only ſerved to protract the ſiege, without preventing the ſurrender of the place. This main event, in that quarter, was preceded by various ſkirmiſhes; which, no more than the Duke of Anjou's campaign in Auvergne, deſerve to be related.

Auguſt 18.

In the mean time, while the proteſtants were rouſed by the ſucceſs of the King's forces, to more vigorous efforts of their ſtrength, the hoſtilities, abruptly begun on both ſides, were on the point of being terminated, by an accommodation between Henry and his brother of Navarre. By the diſpoſition of the former, to quit the advantages gained by his troops, it was evident, that he had reſolved on the ſhew of war, more to avoid the obloquy of the violent catholics, and, as was obſerved, to overawe their confederacies, than from his own inclination to renew the civil broils, and proſecute, violently, the overthrow of the proteſtants. The propoſitions he made * by de Biron and Villeroy, having firſt produced a truce, were, at length, formed into a regular treaty of peace. Its articles ſhowed that he had no deſire to continue the war; and, if we take Sully's account of it, Henry III. deſigned to mortify the Guiſes by this accommodation. The King of Navarre gained juſt reputation by the part he acted in it, as it was well known, that he ſtood as much upon terms for the benefit of the proteſtants, as he had exerted himſelf for his private honour and defence in the field. Conſidered as a rule of government, for eſtabliſhing concord between the catholics and proteſtants; this ſixth pacification appeared to be properly framed. In what the former called the enormities of the Duke of Anjou's peace, its regulations were ſo moderated, as to gratify their affec-

The war is ſoon terminated,

* Mem. liv. 1.

1577.

affectation of ſupereminent authority and intereſt in the ſtate, without depriving the proteſtants of the privileges which they had a title to enjoy, as ſubjects, and ſuch ſecurities, for the fulfilment of the edict, as their ſituation rendered neceſſary. It was called the edict of Poictiers; being publiſhed in that city in the end of September. Its articles, beſides the ſecret ones, amounted to ſixty-three; and its variations, from the laſt peace, conſiſted chiefly in the following points *: Within ten leagues of Paris, the public exerciſe of the proteſtant worſhip was aboliſhed, and, in all other places, it was confined to the cities and diſtricts, where it had been permitted by edicts, previous to the late conceſſions, or where the proteſtants had been in poſſeſſion of that freedom. The chambers of juſtice, compoſed of catholics and proteſtants, were reduced to four, in the kingdom †. Upon the controverted affair of the validity of marriages prohibited by the canon law, it was determined that no proceſs ſhould be allowed with reſpect to thoſe already contracted; but, in all future caſes, the married prieſts and nuns were excluded from every right of inheritance, and could only tranſmit their perſonal eſtates to their children. Some of the ſurety-towns were exchanged for others; and the retention of them was granted for ſix years. Such were the moſt remarkable conditions of this famous edict; which ſeemed a more equitable foundation of agreement, between the two contending parties, than any former one that had been granted by the court; and which deſerves notice, both, as being the act of the King, when under no conſtraint, and ſerving, afterwards, as the model of more permanent eſtabliſhments of the public tranquility.

by the ſixth general peace, called that of Poictiers. September 28.

Having aſſigned the moſt probable motives which influenced Henry to make this peace, it may be neceſſary, likewiſe, to account for

* D'Aubigné, chap. 26. † Thuan. lib. 64. p. 132.

Book I.

1577.

Reaſons of the ſuſpenſion of the catholic confederacies.

for the inconſiderable oppoſition it met with, from that faction of the catholics, that was ſo powerful in the aſſembly of the ſtates. The account given by ſome of the hiſtorians, of both theſe emergencies, is perplexed and doubtful. As to the latter circumſtance, it may be obſerved, that the Duke of Guiſe, who has been mentioned as the favourite chief of the factious catholics, and the intended head of their leagues, by no means ventured to ſhow himſelf, at this period, their open or avowed patron. The ſcene was not ripened enough for his making ſuch an appearance. He was urged to this rather too early, by ſome inferior inſtigators of the catholic inſurrections, whoſe impetuoſity, exceeding their wiſdom, led them to elevate the ſtandard of catholic zeal, before it could be fully ſupported. Acting upon no ſettled plan, and deſtitute of an open conductor, the partial confederacies, eſpecially after the King muſtered his troops in the field, ſoon were diſſipated. Satisfied with the diſcovered propenſity of the catholics, to form ſuch an independent combination as that of their holy league, and with the declaration of the ſtates general, for one religion in the kingdom, the Duke was too circumſpect and prudent to overact his part. Until time ſhould furniſh the requiſite means and contingencies, for promoting, effectually, his ambitious projects, he kept upon the reſerve; and now, only in an indirect way, cheriſhed that feuel of fanatical oppoſition, which he hoped, at a favourable opportunity, to blow up into an inſuperable flame. This account of his preſent conduct will be illuſtrated, from the character to be given of the Duke of Guiſe.

Having gained an apparent ſuperiority over the catholic confederacies, and, by ſubſtituting a new edict in place of the former diſguſtful one, preſcribed a law of his own to the hugonots; Henry too ſoon began to think himſelf the quiet maſter of the parties of his kingdom. He ſeemed to be led into this error, not from want of

of penetration or judgement, but from the bias of his mind to indolence, and a growing averſion to all manly and becoming exertions of his ſpirit. Political ſpeculations drawn from books, or ſuggeſted by the companions of his retirement, were the only occupation of his relaxed faculties *. He was aſſiſted and directed in this ſtudy by two learned Italians, Corbinelli, and Del Bene, who read to him paſſages out of Polybius and Tacitus, and, more frequently, the political diſcourſes, and other works of Machiavel. No deception is more common, than that of adopting maxims of policy as unqueſtionable or ſalutary rules, in all ſituations of government; and there is no more unfortunate one, than to ſubſtitute the refinements of ſtudy in room of the habit of political action. It is preſumable that Henry, as the diſciple of theſe theoretical ſtateſmen, had imbibed the former falacy, when he concluded that the moſt effectual way of extinguiſhing the cabals and factions of the ſtate, was to introduce and propagate, among his courtiers and nobility, a taſte for pleaſure and effeminacy. He did not conſider, that, unleſs the peace he had made was extended over the kingdom, and ſupported by vigorous meaſures, there could be no opportunity for his experiment of this ſcheme; and that, upon an eſtimate of the prevailing manners and habits of the French nobility, in that age, the proſpect of its ſucceſs was extremely remote and precarious.

Henry's ſpeculative policy.

Allured by his own taſte for eaſe and effeminate amuſements, he could not reſiſt making trial of his favourite ſcheme, while himſelf, and his few minions, ſeemed only prepared to become thorough converts to it. He deemed it a rare and happy improvement of the practice of it, to borrow the ſhrowd of catholic devotion, in which he thought himſelf capable of outdoing thoſe fanatical ſons of the church, who derived their popular reputation from their affected

* D'Avila, ibid.

Book I. 1578.

fected adherence to all her discipline. Believing that here he could not err in the extreme *, he imitated all the exterior shews, modes, and gestures of saintly devotion. He built chapels, oratories, and monastic retreats, he solemnized pilgrimages, and processions, in Paris, and other cities; and wore, along with his courtiers, the penitentiary sack, with his beads, and whip at his girdle. Venerable as these exercises were in the eyes of the people, many were surprised to behold a Prince of his youthful age so occupied with them, and began to make inferences, unfavourable to their merit, when they observed them contrasted by his frivolous recreations, and expensive pleasures.

A conference proposed by the Queen-mother with the King of Navarre.

The disunion of the protestants, which weakened their activity in the war, rendered them likewise less unanimous in their acceptance of the peace. Being negociated solely by the King of Navarre, without the intervention of their other chiefs, by some of them it was disrelished on this account, and others had their jealousies, that it would not be sincerely carried into execution by the court. While affairs were in this state of suspense, the Queen-mother had proposed to hold a personal interview with the King of Navarre at Nerac. As Henry seemed wholly ingrossed by his favourites, and amused with his political reveries, and his medleys of pleasure and devotion, Catherine wanted to change the irksome scene, for one in which her active talents could be better displayed. Having the pretext for it, of her presence being necessary to terminate the remaining contentions, to facilitate the reception of the edict of peace, and to settle all disputes about the import of its articles †, she set out upon her expedition to Gascony. As the Queen of Navarre, her daughter, upon the view of a reconciliation with her husband, took her journey thither at the same time; there was such a company of Catherine's female train carried along with them,

* D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 1. Matthieu, p. 448. †. Mem. de la Reine Marguer. liv. 3. p. 185. Sully, liv. 1.

them, as promiſed all the entertainments of gallantry, and of the faſhionable intrigues. It may be reckoned a proper prelude to her arrival at Nerac, that the two towns of Ville-neuve, and Agen, on the confines of Bearn, contrary to the late treaty, were ſeized upon by the Marſhal de Biron.

1578.

This incident gave occaſion to repriſals on the part of the King of Navarre; in which a ſcene was exhibited, altogether pictureſque of the manners of that period. The Queen-mother's approach to the interview, inſtead of being interrupted by the petty combats that enſued, ſeemed only to receive its proper embelliſhment from them. The ſmall court of Navarre, now differently conſtituted from what it was in the late Queen's time, emulated all the gaiety of that of France; and, upon this occaſion, gallantry and diverſions ſtrove with arms for the ſuperiority *. But devoted, as the two parties were to rivalſhip in the former, their martial ſtrife was ſoon ſurmounted by their balls and feſtivities. As the military exploits conſiſted in the ſurpriſe of towns within a league or two of the head-quarters of the court, which boundary was always held inviolable; curious improvements were made in the ſecrecy, and expedition of the aſſaults; and the incidents in them often afforded entertainment. The night of a ball was frequently choſen for the more unexpected execution of them; and he that had led up the dance, was found, before its concluſion, to have poſſeſſed himſelf of a garriſon. When theſe interludes of martial proweſs were deemed too bold, or offenſive, the courts ſeparated from each other, till the paſſion for pleaſure, in a little time, united them again.

Auguſt.

Military exploits contraſted with gallantry.

Upon this ſubject, ſome anecdotes are well calculated to fill up the pages of memoirs, or to beſtrew the margins of facetious hiſto-

 ries.

* Ibid.

Book I. 1578.

ries. Such is the ſtory of old Uſſac's untimely fit of love, which diverted the court, though the King of Navarre loſt the town of Reole by it *. In his youth, the example of gravity, prudence, and wiſe behaviour, to other officers of the army, and, from his character, promoted to be governor of Reole; he ſuffered himſelf, when worn with years, and weakened and disfigured with ſcars, to be overtaken with a deſperate paſſion for one of Queen Catherine's maids of honour. He betrayed his truſt, by the ſurrender of Reole; he forſook his party; and he renounced his religion. How hapleſs was the deſtiny of Uſſac, to exemplify, at his age, all the tyranny of love; to pay ſo dear for his extravagance in this paſſion; and to be ridiculed for what all the men of honour accounted worthy to be idolized! For various months Queen Catherine perſevered in this campaign; ſo agreeable to her taſte, from the intermixture of pleaſure, politics, and petty ſtratagems of war. Expert in managing every incident, in extending the intrigues, political and amorous, and exciting emulations and jealouſies among the King of Navarre's chief officers and confidents; ſhe was ſure of gaining ſome advantage, and, beſides the ſenſible delight ſhe had in the ſcene itſelf, of adding ſuch a trophy, as it afforded, to her other political triumphs. In the miſunderſtanding between the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé, in the challenge given by the latter to the Viſcount of Turenne, and in the combat that enſued upon it, between this commander and de Duras, and Roſan, and in the ſeduction of Lavardin, and others, from the court of Navarre, the energy of Queen Catherine's genius was ſufficiently apparent; together with the motives of her long ſtay in Gaſcony, which, to many, appeared inexplicable.

Before the Queen-mother quitted this field of action, another eſſay of her artifices was beheld; which, from its ſingularity, and

* D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 2.

1578.

Queen Catherine's diſſimulation ſingularly exemplified.

and on account of the perſonages concerned in it, may be reckoned no leſs entertaining than what has been related. Among her other projects, ſhe had conceived that of inducing the proteſtant chiefs to give up ſome of the towns pledged to them for the execution of the King's edict; or, at leaſt, to abridge the time fixed for their delivery. Upon this head, the King of Navarre's reply to her was, that, without the cognizance of a general aſſembly of the proteſtant deputies, the queſtion could not be entered upon. Preſuming that nothing was inſuperable by her artificial management, and capable of adapting it to every ſcene, ſhe determined to repair to Montauban in Languedoc *, where ſhe underſtood that the convention of them was ſoon to be held. Having carried along with her Pibrac, and others, whom ſhe judged fit to addreſs thoſe provincial chieftains; ſhe inſtructed them in the proper arguments to be uſed upon the delicate ſubject. By her direction, they opened it only in ſeparate conferences with particular deputies, and inſinuated to them, rather than argued, that the ſituation of the proteſtants was rendered unequal by the poſſeſſion of theſe ſurety-towns; while ſome of them were defended, and in a capacity of annoying their neighbours, and others were expoſed to violence, and incurſions. Finding, not only that the argument was endured, but that ſeveral of the deputies, picqued at others, who had attained the government of the towns, expreſſed themſelves with coolneſs and moderation upon it; ſhe ventured to convene a number of them together in her lodging. During her ſtay in Gaſcony, it had been part of her diverſion with her domeſtics, to learn and imitate the peculiar diction, tone of voice, and geſtures in diſcourſe, which were common to many of the proteſtant provincials. This elocution was called by her, the *conſiſtorial dialect*; and, more ironically, the *language of Canaan*. Uſſac's miſtreſs is ſaid to have been

 a great

* Ibid. chap. 3.

Book I.

1578.

a great adept in it. Being culled from the ſcriptures, this phraſeology was too much affected by the proteſtants in France, and other countries, as the grave decoration of their ordinary diſcourſe. Pibrac was now called upon to practiſe his leſſons in it, in order to his haranguing, with efficacy, the meeting of the deputies, who were called by Catherine, and her train, the *iron viſages*. Being a genius in ſuch imitations, Pibrac made his ſpeech to them, a pattern of this ſtyle. He uſed for the name of King, the ſcriptural phraſe of *The anointed of the Lord. He obteſted the aſſembly, before God, and his angels*; and gave the whole of his oration ſo much of the hyperbolic pathos, that the deputies ſtood amazed. Queen Catherine, upon the concluſion of it, ariſing from her ſeat, with her eyes bedewed, and her hands lifted up, cried out, *Ah! my friends, let us give glory to the living God, and beſeech him to lay aſide the rod of iron.* Accoſting them, then, in a calmer tone, ſhe aſked, "What can any of you object to the reaſoning you have heard?" All of them remained ſpeechleſs, until La Meauſſe, the governor of one of the ſurety-towns, recovering from ſurpriſe, made anſwer, in his blunt manner, and broad accent: "I ſay, Madame, that the gentleman, verily, is an extraordinary proficient in his ſtudies; but why we ſhould pay for his improvements, with our throats, it is impoſſible for us to conceive a reaſon." By this reply, and a ſubſequent conference ſhe had with La Meauſſe, Catherine found, that the underſtandings of theſe unfaſhionable provincials were not ſo much to be ridiculed, as ſhe might imagine, from their expreſſing themſelves in the dialect of *Canaan*. Having ſhown, abundantly, by ſuch eſſays of it, the reach of her verſatile genius, and ſettled, with the King of Navarre, ſome explications of the late edict, which ſerved, afterwards, for the baſis of a new peace, rather than any ſure eſtabliſhment of the preſent one; ſhe proceeded to finiſh her long circuit, through the ſouthern provinces, by a conference with the Duke of Savoy, and returned to Paris, in the ſpring of the following year.

When

1578.

When the proteſtant chiefs were more fully * conveened at Montauban, ſeveral meſſages, ſent from Catherine, in the King's name, about giving up the cautionary towns, were again laid before them. Though this demand was refuſed, and the inſiſting upon it might have created freſh animoſity and diſguſt, yet ſeveral deputies of ſuch provinces and diſtricts as had laid aſide arms, either in ſubmiſſion to the late edict, or in conſequence of particular compacts with the catholic governors, expreſſed their averſion to the revival of hoſtilities. It was, however, ſo far conſidered, by others of the chiefs, as an evidence of the intention of the court to infringe the edict, that, at their inſtigation, a reſolution was taken to be prepared for war. To preſerve the ſecrecy of this determination, and, at the ſame time, in caſe of the meaſure being neceſſary to have the advantage of diſpatch, two French crowns were broken, and ſome pieces of them tranſmitted to Leſdiguieres in Dauphiny, and to de Chaſtillon in Languedoc. When the fragments of them, which remained in the King of Navarre's hands, ſhould be ſent to theſe commanders, they were to be accounted by them the ſignals for a general inſurrection of the proteſtants. The latter chieftain being ſon to the famous Admiral Coligni, the great name of his father, among the proteſtants, enſured him of early and particular favour with them. The diſcovery, already made, of his military ſpirit and capacity, was not unworthy of his family; and his ſubſequent appearance, as a commander in the field, confirmed his title to ſingular eſteem, and reputation.

The proteſtant chiefs on their guard againſt any breach of the peace.

* Thuan. lib. 68. p. 208.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Henry addicted to Favourites, and Effeminacy.——Duke of Anjou's Turbulence, and League with the States of Holland.——Order of the Holy Ghoſt inſtituted.——Conteſt of the Court with the Clergy.——Inſurrection of the Proteſtants.——Peace of Fleix.

Book I. 1578.

WHILE, in Gaſcony, war was rendered a ſcene of gaiety and diverſion, Henry's pleaſures, in the midſt of peace, were ſo calculated, that, neither his private ſatisfaction, nor the entertainment of his court, ſeemed to be much promoted by them. Averſe, from * policy, to make confidents or companions of his chief nobility, he was entirely engroſſed by ſome of theſe young eleves of his court, whoſe turn to effeminate amuſements agreed moſt with his own. They were, in ſcorn, called his *minions*; which epithet, with ſmall variation from the French one, was ſoon adopted in the Engliſh and other foreign languages. The aſcendency they gained over him was ſuch, that all his recreations and paſtimes, both public and private, ſeemed to be accommodated to their taſte. Hence drawn, along with them, into that train of diſſipation and prodigality, in which he wiſhed to engage his turbulent nobles, he expoſed his character to ridicule and contempt, and afforded a palpable example of the diſhonour and depravation conſequent to a voluptuous life. The hatred and oppoſition raiſed againſt his minions, and the frequent conteſts they had with thoſe who envied or deſpiſed them, proved, often, a ſource of diſquiet to the King. Three of them made a fatal exit; one of them being killed at the gate of the Louvre; and the other two mortally wounded in a duel, with ſome of the Duke of Guiſe's retainers. Henry expreſſed

Henry ingroſſed by his minions.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 459. Thuan. lib. 66. p. 183.

preſſed his grief for them, in a manner that ſhowed, both his own extreme ſenſibility, and the affectation of extravagance in all the faſhionable paſſions, which was part of the ſingular manners of that period. He ſat, for ſeveral hours of night, and day, at the bedſide of Quelus, while languiſhing under his incurable wounds. His body, when dead, was laid in ſtate; and the coſtly tombs erected for him and his companions, bore inſcriptions, that deplored their cruel and untimely fate.

It was no leſs matter of anxious concern to Henry, how to repreſs the vanity and reſtleſs preſumption of his brother Anjou. He was chiefly directed in his purpoſes, as has been obſerved, by Buſſy d'Amboiſe; a man who, in a court ſo corrupted and factious, outdid the moſt diſſolute, in profligacy, and the moſt daring, in violent enterpriſe; and over the groſs vices of whoſe character, the faſhionable varniſh of courage and gallantry, was thrown. Buſſy, always at variance with the King's favourites, and diſpoſed to brave them, never ſuffered Anjou to be long in peace with his brother and the court. Some time before this, the ſcheme of a treaty, for introducing Anjou into the Low Countries, as an aſſiſtant protector of the States*, had been ſecretly concerted by his ſiſter, the Queen of Navarre, when at Spa. It was the favourite project of that Princeſs, both for his advancement, and in order to detatch him from the court; and Buſſy, her champion, was ſtrenuous in ſolliciting the Duke to proſecute it, either with or without the will of the King. Upon being acquainted with it, Henry, timorous of offending Spain, had rather declined conſenting to it, than oppoſed it. At length, when, by the defeat given by Don John of Auſtria, to the forces of the ſtates, at Gemblours, Anjou's aid became more deſireable to them; his eſcape from the court was reſolved upon, and executed,

Duke of Anjou turbulent and ambitious.

* Mem. de la Reigne, Marg. liv. 2. p. 121. et 159.

Book I.

1578.

executed, by the contrivance of his ſiſter, and the help of Buſſy d'Amboiſe. The King, at firſt, in great indignation, was in ſome meaſure pacified by a declaration from Anjou, that he meant only, without troubling the ſtate, to carry on his treaty with the Belgic confederates, upon his own private footing and expence. A manifeſto, ſuch as Princes uſe to colour any undertaking, being publiſhed by him, he proceeded to raiſe a body of troops for his expedition into Flanders.

Forms a league with the ſtates of Holland.

It appeared, by the conditions of Anjou's league with the ſtates, that the inlarged revenue of his appenage, and appointments in France, enabled him to purſue the flights of his ambition *. He ingaged to keep on foot, for the firſt three months, no fewer than ten thouſand infantry, and two thouſand horſemen. It was evident, likewiſe, from the terms of it, that the ſtates, or a party of them, were diſpoſed to ſubſtitute him in the room of the Archduke Matthias of Auſtria. When preſent in the council of the confederates, he was to bear the name and rank of chief commander of the army, in conjunction with the ſtates themſelves, or their generaliſſimo. To the council, as already conſtituted, and the Archduke Matthias, the ſupreme adminiſtration was declared to belong; but, in caſe they renounced the ſovereignty of the Catholic King, and ſhould chuſe any other liege-lord, they bound themſelves to give Anjou the preference to all other competitors. For ſurety, and a retreat to his troops, three frontier towns being delivered up to him, he ſoon prepared to march into Flanders. Though his appearing as an auxiliary to the ſtates, at that juncture, proved of ſome advantage to them, they were not much relieved by his aid. In the mean time, the King, his brother, who had borne with his procedure, without authoriſing it, made his envoy at the court of Spain diſavow

* Matthieu, p. 474.

1578.

vow his concern in Anjou's expedition, and ſent Bellievre to exhort the ſtates to an agreement with their ſovereign. Shortly after, the Duke being diſguſted, or affecting to take offence, at ſome part of the ſtates's conduct, quitted the campaigne, and left a conſiderable part of his troops, that never joined the confederates, to be diſſipated, or to be hired into the ſervice of the oppoſite parties *. It is alledged, that his preſent engagement with the ſtates was conſidered by him as ſubſervient to a higher aim, which was that of his match with the Queen of England. He believed he might recommend himſelf the more to her favour, by this political connexion; and obtain her conſent to his being elected Sovereign Duke of Brabant. With theſe views, he ſoon paſſed over to England, to proſecute, perſonally, his connubial addreſſes to Elizabeth. About this time, his confident, Buſſy d' Amboiſe, met with that fate he had often merited and provoked. Montſoreau, informed, as it is ſaid, by the King, of his wife's gallantry with Buſſy †, obliged her to give him an aſſignation, in a caſtle, where he was prepared to give him a reception, ſuitable to his viſit. The interview was fatal to Buſſy; though his valour, in this laſt and unequal proof of it, appeared invincible.

October.

Henry, in the courſe of his reading, or political reflexions, being inſtructed in the uſe to which the eſtabliſhments of chivalry, in various ſtates and kingdoms, had been made ſubſervient, reſolved to revive this ſubſidiary tye of government in France. As the order of St Michael was much declined in reputation, it appeared neceſſary to him, to ſupply this defect, by erecting a new one, under the title of the order of the *Holy Ghoſt*. He fixed upon this name, on account of his having been elected King of Poland, and having ſucceeded to the crown of France upon the feſtival of Pentecoſte,

* D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 21. † Fortune de la cour liv. 3. ajouté aux Mem. de Marguer. Thuan. lib. 66. p. 183.

Book I. 1579.

marked in ſcripture by the deſcent of the Spirit *. He aſſumed to himſelf, and annexed to the crown, the ſovereignty of this order; and limited the number of the knights to a hundred; among whom, none were to be admitted, but the deſcendents of the ancient nobility. It was his intention to have ſtrengthened this religious band of union between them and the crown, by ſecularizing ſome portion

January 1.

of the revenues of the rich monaſteries, for the benefit of the knights. But, the application for this being refuſed at the court of Rome, they were only rewarded with penſions. As Henry ſuppoſed that this inſtitution, from the double tye of religion, and ſecular honour, might contribute to ſuppreſs other catholic aſſociations a-

Inſtitution of the order of the Holy Ghoſt.

mong his chief nobility; he made it an indiſpenſible ſtatute of it, that all who were received into the order ſhould be profeſſed catholics, and vow to live and die in that faith. In the diſpenſation of other honours and emoluments of the ſtate, where this excluſive obligation was leſs requiſite, it appears that Henry was guided by the ſame illiberal principle; and, that he thought it the beſt political method of engaging the proteſtants to deſert their religion, to make all civil dignity and preferment attend the change. It is even affirmed, that he kept ſo rigidly to this rule, that, in all the numerous offices and departments of his houſhold, not one perſon was employed who did not go to maſs, except Cerceau, the moſt celebrated French architect in his time. This management ſhowed that Henry, without any ſentiment favourable to toleration, or a more generous view of political government, had granted the edict of Poictiers, only to avoid a civil war. But as, upon this ſyſtem, which propagated the antipathies of the two religions, and furniſhed the proteſtants with many grounds of diſcontent, a laſting peace could not be eſtabliſhed; ſo it was, unfortunately, moſt remarkable that Henry's auſtere policy, with reſpect to the proteſtants, did not

* Matthieu, p. 418. Thuan. lib. 68. p. 206.

not prevent or invalidate the clamours of the violent catholics againſt his adminiſtration. 1579.

At this time, Henry had a particular proof given him how little the clerical order, whom he endeavoured to ſooth, could be depended upon, as friends in his neceſſity. The ſtates of Blois having left the ſupply of the ſubſidies upon them, and the city of Paris, their deputies, by permiſſion of the King, aſſembled at Melun. Upon ſuch occaſions, when their pecuniary gifts to the ſtate were to be ſettled, it was an ordinary piece of policy with them, to evade any diſagreeable exaction, by introducing other ſubjects into debate among them, and to preſent petitions and remonſtrances upon them to the King *. Deſirous to get rid of a conceſſion of four tenths of their revenues, to which, ever ſince the meeting of the ſtates at Pointoiſe, 1561, they had ſubjected themſelves, they determined to take this courſe with Henry; and inſiſted, eagerly, that, to reſtore the antient diſcipline of the church, he ſhould publiſh the council of Trent, and aboliſh the concordat; which prevented the free and proper elections to benefices. The King's temperate reply encouraging them to more boldneſs, the deputies of their aſſembly, headed by the Archbiſhop of Lyons, thought to carry the laſt point by vehemence, in his preſence; and inveighed much againſt his nomination of prelates, unworthy of their function. Henry, when rouſed, or willing to exert his faculties, ſhowed himſelf inferior to none, in the acuteneſs and propriety of his reaſoning; and the teſtimony he gave of both, upon this occaſion, deſerves particular mention. "It is unjuſt, ſaid he, to place to my account, the ſource of all your eccleſiaſtical diſorders and corruptions, becauſe I exerciſe a right, granted by the Popes themſelves, to my predeceſſors; and which is enjoyed by the Kings of Spain and Poland, and many o-

Conteſts raiſed by the clergy, who inſiſt for the diſſolution,

* Ibid. Thuan. p. 209.

Book I. 1579.

thers. To confeſs, with you, that my nominations to beneſices have been injudicious and culpable, would be an indecency, and a reproach on many members of that aſſembly, from whence you come. But how ſhall I own the commiſſion of ſuch miſtakes? In the face of you, the Primate of Lyons, you the Biſhop of Nevers, and you of Bazas, who have been, each of you, promoted to the dignities you hold, by my appointment? Whether you would have attained them by the canonical elections you contend for, may, at leaſt, admit of a doubt; but, ſurely, none will call in queſtion your eminent qualifications for them. As to pluralities of beneſices, which, you have ſaid, the canons condemn; if ſuch ſollicitors, as yourſelves, did not importune me, they ſhould, by no means, be inforced by my gifts." Struck with this ſpirited and ſevere reprehenſion of their incoherent and equivocal arguments, the deputies deſiſted from their remonſtrance.

But, the repulſe given them, in this preliminary conteſt, did not hinder them from diſcovering the utmoſt obſtinacy, upon the more intereſting one, about the continuation of their former ſubſidy, to which they were engaged by ſome contracts, limited in time, with the city of Paris *. Having drawn up a declarative proteſtation, that all of them were already fulfilled and acquitted, they diſſolved their aſſembly at Melun, after appointing a large body of the prelates, and other dignitaries, to repair to the city, and intimate, by a ſerjeant at law, this act of their meeting, to the Prevôt des Marchands, and other magiſtrates. The rumour of the ſubverſion of their contracts being ſoon divulged through Paris, the citizens, affected by it, ſhut up their ſhops and inns; and the populace, informed that widows and orphans were bereft of their all, by the fraud of the clergy, began to raiſe a general uproar. The cauſe of the tumult being

Septem. 25.

Of their pecuniary contracts.

* Ibid.

1579. An arret of the parliament againſt all the biſhops.

being explained by the magiſtrates before the court of parliament, a ſingular and ſtrong ſtep was taken by the latter. A decree was iſſued for arreſting all the biſhops in their quarters, and for obliging them to anſwer, at law, to the King's ſuit againſt them. The affronted prelates now ſent their complaints againſt the parliament to the King, while ſome of the more violent among them accounted it more honourable to perſiſt in their obſtinate courſe, and wait the execution of the arret againſt them. At length, upon ſome conferences being held at the Louvre, the extraordinary conteſt was terminated. Without inſiſting upon the further approbation or renewal of their contracts, Henry accepted the offer of one million, three hundred thouſand livres, which was made by the peaceable party of them. Thus, by ſhowing more reſolution and firmneſs than was uſual with him, Henry, for once, obliged thoſe antagoniſts to yield; of whom he generally ſtood in awe; and who, afterwards, took all advantages of his timidity.

If Henry's vigour, in the executive parts of government, had equalled his anxiety to maintain the public peace, his reign would have furniſhed better grounds for the elogiums of hiſtory *. A laudable ſcheme was formed by him, and the attempt made, to redreſs the enormous injuries ſuſtained by the people in the provinces, and to remedy or alleviate the oppreſſions they ſuffered, either from the unjuſt exerciſe of legal authority, or from the uſurpation and violence of the lawleſs chieftains. A number of commiſſioners, conſiſting of ſome biſhops, and nobles of the King's council, were appointed, like the *Miſſi Dominici* in antient times, to viſit the provincial governments. They were empowered to call before them, in the principal city of every province, and bailliwick, the biſhop of the dioceſe; the chief nobles, the officers of juſtice, and the magiſtrates

* Matthieu, p. 455.

ſtrates of towns; and to receive information from them with reſpect to the uſage of the clergy, and the ſtate of the church, the deportment of the Lords of fiefs, and of the officers of the police, both in the adminiſtration of juſtice, and of the revenues. They were enjoined to promote the execution of the edict of peace, and to take up a liſt of all the caſtles and houſes of the nobility that were, without authority, fortified. Numberleſs were the complaints and inſtances of iniquity and rapine laid before them. One ſpecies of oppreſſion, in the impoſt on ſalt, gave a view of the ſhameful practices in the collection of the public taxes. Though it had been quadrupled in ſix years, the poor were ſtill forced, whether or not they could uſe or pay for ſo much, to take the ſame quantity of ſalt. Upon defects of payment, the farmer of the revenue pitched upon the perſon he thought the ableſt in the village, and obliged him to diſcharge the arrears of all the reſt. It is ſaid, that ſome examples of juſt ſeverity were made. But, neither the ſtate of public affairs, nor Henry's faint and variable councils, were ſuited to ſuch an enterpriſe of general reformation.

Effort of Henry to remedy civil abuſes.

While Henry thought himſelf, in a good meaſure, ſecure from the rage of civil broils, a freſh eruption of them was near. It is needleſs to aſſign the inſignificant reaſons of ſome hiſtorians, as an apology for this ſudden inſurrection of a party of the proteſtants, under the King of Navarre. Neither the demand of the court for the ſurrender of the towns of ſurety, nor the refuſal of ſome diſtricts which made up the Queen of Navarre's dowry, to be ſubjected to the authority of her ſpouſe, were ſo ſeriouſly inſiſted upon, as to juſtify or provoke this recourſe to arms. Motives, different from theſe, created by female intrigues and reſentments, muſt be allowed to have had the chief influence in the reſolution with reſpect to it *.

December.

Private intrigues and reſentments occaſion another inſurrection.

The

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. v.

The Queen of Navarre's reconciliation with her conſort had placed her in the ſituation ſhe wiſhed, to be the inſtigator of diſcord with her brother Henry, who had often teſtified his diſlike of her, as ſhe had ſhown her conſtant preference of the Duke of Anjou to him. It is ſaid, that Henry, dreading her political intrigues, informed her ſpouſe of her gallantry with the Viſcount of Turenne. To leſſen the ſcandal of her amours that were divulged, ſhe employed her wit in palliating that libertiniſm which was extremely prevalent in that period; and preached up, that there was a meanneſs in the concealment of the tender paſſion, inconſiſtent with the ſpirit of heroiſm. As the tye of conjugal affection had never ſubſiſted between her and Henry, ſhe could, without jealouſy, ſee him follow that latitude in his amours to which he was inclined. Eaſily ſucceſsful in entangling that Prince, and his chief officers, in a train of gallantry, and often in directing their particular attachments, the court of Nerac, and the cabinet, were rendered, by her artifices, ſubſervient altogether to female caprice and reſentment. Every miſtreſs, and eſpecially Henry's favourite one, was inſtructed to invent or repeat ſtories about the deriſive and ſcornful language uſed by the King of France, and his minions, with reſpect to the chiefs of the hugonot party. Upon men, apt enough to embrace the leaſt pretence of affronted honour, in order to ſignalize their proweſs, ſuch irritating ſuggeſtions wrought the deſired effect. A council being called, war was ſo unanimouſly reſolved upon, that not one but Favas, whom age had freed from the heats of paſſion, ventured to ſpeak in favour of peace. It was juſtly denominated the war of *the amorous;* and, with ſuch rapidity were the reſolutions for it taken, and the tokens of it tranſmitted by the King of Navarre, that Pibrac, placed about his conſort, to watch the motions of her ſuſpected reſentment, could ſend no timely advice of it to the court of France; for which he incurred the diſpleaſure of his maſter.

The war called that of the *Amorous*.

Amidſt

Book I.

1580.

Amidſt ſuch a company of gallant warriors as compoſed the court of Nerac, every one vied with another in contrivances for ſurpriſing towns, and in conferting the moſt ſpirited and ingenious enterpriſes. Several of them, ſuggeſted by undeliberate ardor for the field, ſcarcely preſented the leaſt view of ſucceſs; others depended on preſumptions, or vague intelligence, about the ſtate of garriſons, which failed; and, in moſt of them, the muſters of the proteſtant troops fell far ſhort of what was expected *. Two thirds of their partizans, from diſreliſh of hoſtilities, would not engage in this recourſe to arms. The Rochellers took no part in it; la Noüe had accepted a command in Flanders; and the Prince of Condé had acted upon a ſeparate plan. When ſuch a multiplicity of petty enterpriſes in ſome provinces diſtant from each other, were thus grafted upon the efforts of the King of Navarre and his officers, in concert only with Chatillon and Leſdeguieres, it was not ſurpriſing, that, beſides the reduction of La Fere by the Prince of Condé, two of them were all that ſucceeded. Before mentioning the aſſault of Cahors, the only one deſerving notice, it is proper to obſerve, for the ſake of other parts of the military hiſtory, that the piece of artillery, called the *Petard*, began to be firſt uſed at this time †, in demoliſhing the gates of towns, and making breaches in towers and ramparts. The firſt models of it were very ſimple, being framed of ſhort plates of iron, wreathed or hammered together, in the ſhape of a mortar. They were, afterwards, made of caſten iron, or mixed metal. Being filled with powder, and fixed to gates or draw-bridges, they were fired by a match. Another engine, for like purpoſes, was the *Sauciſſe*, compoſed of folds of leather ſued into baggs, which they ſqueezed into the gaps of walls, and diſcharged by a powder train. Theſe were the chief inſtruments employed in the ſudden aſſaults of fortified places by the hugonots, during the enſuing period of the civil wars,

* D'Aubigné, chap. 7. Mem. de Sully, *liv.* 1. † Ibid. D'Aubigné.

wars, as they were generally deſtitute of cannon, and their troops were ſeldom ſufficient in numbers, to form a regular ſiege.

1580.

Though the King of Navarre could not draw together, in one place, above two thouſand ſoldiers, he reſolved to attack the city of Cahors, invironed, except in one ſide, by a river, defended by the ordinary ramparts, and a garriſon of more than fifteen hundred men; which was likely to be in a few days reinforced *. According to Sully's narrative of this enterpriſe, which is related, with much the ſame circumſtances, by ſeveral of the hiſtorians; ſcarce any military action could exceed it in labour and fatigue, in perſonal danger to the aſſailants, and in the great hazard of its ſucceſs. Before the barricade, in the market-place, and a retrenchment, in the college, were forced, five days and nights were ſpent, in almoſt incredible toils; from want of reſt and nouriſhment, and from inceſſant combats with the enemy. The ſhattered armour, wounded perſons, and exhauſted ſtrength of Henry, and his principal officers, teſtified what ſuch a victory had expoſed them to ſuffer. Being that Prince's chief enterpriſe, in a war undertaken at the inſtigation of his conſort, he believed that his reputation and honour required him to purchaſe this conqueſt, at all hazards. When ſollicited by his officers, in the extremity of danger, to retreat out of the city, he anſwered, "Since, now, it cannot be done with honour, my ſoul ſhall ſooner retreat out of my body." The fame of the reſolute exploit being every where ſpread, became highly advantageous to him.

In other quarters, where the hoſtilities commenced, de Chatillon was obliged to oppoſe the Marſhal Montmorency, who now declared for the King, and the maintenance of the edict of Poictiers;

* Ibid. Sully, D'Avila, D'Aubigné.

Book I. 1580.

and Leſdiguieres prepared himſelf for combating the Duke of Mayenne, who was ſent with an army into Dauphiny. In the fortreſſes of this province *, the proteſtant chieftain, whoſe reputation for military abilities and bravery was greater than his perſonal intereſt with his party, diſpoſed the few troops he could aſſemble in a manner ſo advantageous, that Mayenne's progreſs was much interrupted. But, in the general diſagreement of the proteſtants, about the expediency of the war, the few active chiefs, in the field, only diſtinguiſhed their courage and conduct, by ſurpriſingly protracting their reſiſtence with ſuch unequal forces. La Fere, in Picardy, after an obſtinate defence, was re-taken by the King's troops; and the Marſhal Biron, now advanced with a large body of forces to the confines of Gaſcony. The King of Navarre, by ſeveral ſtratagems of war, and ſome bold ſkirmiſhes, ſpun out the campaign, till further reinforcements that came to his antagoniſt, obliged him, at laſt, to retire into Nerac. The ladies of the court had then a near view of that martial vigour which they had excited; ſince, on account of the frequent ſallies from the town, de Biron thought it allowable to blockade it; though the Queen of Navarre had obtained the privilege of a neutrality for the place of her reſidence. The military ſcene † had the double aſpect of a campaign, and of a ſiege; till the news of a peace being in agitation, made the Marſhall think fit to withdraw his army.

After the aſſaults of various places, Auguſt 31.

The ſudden revolution from war to peace again, ſhowed that the eruption of hoſtilities had ariſen from no other motives than ſuch as have been aſſigned. As the Duke of Anjou became the chief mediator of peace, it is even probable, as ſome hiſtorians affirm, that he was in concert with his ſiſter of Navarre, the promoter of this inſurrection. His political view was, to oblige the King his brother

a peace is treated of;

* D'Avila, ibid. D'Aubigné, chap. 9. † Mem. de Sully, ibid.

1580.

brother to give his conſent and aſſiſtance to his eſtabliſhment in Flanders; to which, he knew, nothing would more readily engage him, than the proſpect of a deliverance, by it, from domeſtic broils. This argument had been often uſed with Henry; but he felt the force of it only when he was involved in perplexity. At this time it produced its full effect upon him. As the proſpect of Anjou's attainment of this foreign dignity became more certain, the Queen-mother, and her party, inſiſted that he could not, in honour, neglect ſuch an opportunity of extending the intereſt and glory of the houſe of France. Having undertaken *, to the King, for the immediate negociation of a peace, the Duke ſet out with Bellievre and Villeroy for Guienne. The accommodation was ſoon finiſhed with the King of Navarre, at a caſtle called Fleix, on the Dordonne. Senſible of his precipitation in beginning the war, this Prince, though he knew that Anjou would grant much to purchaſe it, at this juncture, ſtarted no unreaſonable difficulties, about the terms of peace. On the contrary †, the hiſtorians obſerve, that, to facilitate a meaſure conducive to the welfare and glory of the kingdom, he made ſome conceſſions, that were not neceſſary, upon articles relative to his own intereſt, and which depended upon his own will; and offered generouſly, if it ſhould be found for the ſervice of the realm, to lead, himſelf, a body of troops into Flanders.

and concluded by the intervention of Anjou at Fleix.

The conditions of this peace, beſides ſome ſecret articles, comprehended little more than explications of the edict of Poictiers, which had been agreed upon, with the Queen-mother, at Nerac. Without a formal publication, being approved by ſome proteſtant deputies, it was ſigned by the King of Navarre ‡ in the end of November; and, ſoon after, ratified by the King of France, and entered upon record by the parliament of Paris.

Novem. 26.

* Matthieu, p. 459. † Memoires de la ligue, quart. edit. tom. 1. p. 543. D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 22. Ibid. liv. 5. chap. 2.

BOOK I.

1580.

The general acceptance of it by the proteſtant chiefs was chiefly obſtructed by the Prince of Condé. After the loſs of la Fere; as if ſpited at his fortune, he had taken a long rout through Holland and Germany, to ſollicit ſuccours; and, having met with ſome perilous adventures, was now returned into France, with conditional promiſes of aid from Duke Caſimir. Acceptable to many of the proteſtant partizans, as more detached from the court, and the catholics, than the King of Navarre; it was to be feared, that his perſonal ſolicitation, eſpecially when foreign ſupport was offered, might prevail with ſome of them to favour his oppoſition. But the former, from foreſight of ſuch application by him, had ſent the Viſcount of Turenne into Languedoc, and other commiſſioners into different provinces, to counteract it. They proved ſo ſucceſsful, that the cities, on which Condé chiefly relied, gave a cold or negative anſwer to his propoſals. He found himſelf obliged to adopt the treaty, and Leſdiguiers, ſoon after, ſubmitted to it.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

History of some years, more free of domestic Broils.—Characters of Henry's Favourites, Joyeuse, and Espernon.—Convention of the Assembly of the Notables.—Henry's affected Devotion.—Characters of his Counsellors, and of the three Brothers of Guise.

AFTER the peace concluded at Fleix, the domestic affairs of France, during five successive years, require a general survey, but not a regular deduction of them. A calm interval now ensued, which, for many years past, had been unknown in the nation. Though faction still remained, and the party-leaders could not be said to have dropt their ambitious schemes; the turbulence *, and public distractions occasioned by them, were almost wholly suppressed. The Duke of Anjou's expedition into the Low Countries, by carrying off a number of catholic and protestant officers and partizans, gave a beginning to this happy repose of the kingdom. As Henry, evidently, treated the protestants as subjects whom he wished to rule in peace, but by no means as a favoured party, many of the violent catholics acquiesced in his edict of toleration. His policy, in excluding the former from the honours and employments of the state, though illiberal and unjust, had yet its influence in shaking the constancy of the interested among them †. Hence their writers complain of a greater declension, from religious principles, within a few years of peace, at this period, than during thirty, of persecutions, wars, and massacres. By the cessation of hostilities, for a space of time, the prejudices and resentments of the two parties began to abate in a considerable degree; and the taste of the

BOOK I.
1581.

* Thuan. lib. 74. p. 90. † Histoire de l'edict. de Nantes, tom. 1. p. 74.

BOOK I. 1581.

the ſweets of peace, which continual broils had extinguiſhed, was ſeen to revive. In the event, it appeared that, when the two religious ſects had cooled of their animoſities, the factions of the ſtate, rendered audacious by a weak reign, contributed, chiefly, to throw them back into former enmity and rage.

Without ſtrictly regarding the order of the events, it will therefore be ſufficient to place together, in one general view, ſuch an account of Henry's adminiſtration of the ſtate; of the characters of his favourites and miniſters; and of the factious opponents of his government; as may properly illuſtrate that ſignal, and violent conteſt of the parties, which enſued ſoon after the death of the Duke of Anjou, in the year 1584.

Henry's propenſity to indolence and pleaſures became the more predominant with him, when he found no diſturbance from domeſtic broils or commotions. He ſeemed almoſt to diſappear in the ſphere of political government, or to aſſume only, by ſtarts, ſuch a ſhare of it as was ſuitable to the peculiarity of his genius and temper *. Generally addicted to a retired life among his favourites, a circle of balls and maſquerades, and other entertainments contrived by them, engaged his chief attention. An exceſs of ſenſibility and conceit, in his attachments to minions, uncommon in private life, and hardly ever ſeen in the ſtate of royalty, led him to gratify them with the moſt extravagant largeſſes, and to load them with the higheſt honours of the ſtate. The two, whom he diſtinguiſhed above others, by ſuch marks of his affection and munificence, were Anne d'Arques Viſcount of Joyeuſe, and Lewis la Vallette Baron of Eſpernon. Not ſatisfied with raiſing them to the moſt conſpicuous and envied dignities, his wiſh ſeemed to be, to have them connected with the throne itſelf, and to equal, or to prefer them to the princes of his

Henry's prodigality to his minions.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 468.

his blood. The dukedom conferred on the former of theſe noblemen, was declared to have a precedency to all other peerages, excepting thoſe enjoyed by the deſcendents of the royal line. Similar honours were beſtowed on Eſpernon. To inhance the pre-eminence of both, and, at the ſame time, to palliate it to the other nobles of the court *, Henry propoſed to match each of theſe favourites with a ſiſter of his Queen's; and, accordingly, Joyeuſe's marriage with one of the Princeſſes of Vaudemont actually took place. In the expences of the nuptials, beſides the dowry he gave, it was computed, that little leſs than four millions of livres were laviſhed by the King. By exchanging the county of Avignon, the Pope's territory in France, with the Marquiſate of Saluſſes, Henry alſo projected to put this favourite in poſſeſſion of a principality. Joyeuſe was ſent to Rome, to ſolicite, in perſon, this tranſaction with his Holineſs; but it did not ſucceed, notwithſtanding the ſplendor and profuſion diſplayed by him, ſufficiently teſtified what command he had of the coffers of his prodigal maſter.

There was ſuch a diſtinction in the characters of theſe two favourites, as ſhowed, that Henry was more influenced by fancy and conceit, than guided by judgement, in the choice of his minions. Not unambitious; vain of the favour he enjoyed, and confident above his talents; Joyeuſe was of a temper more tractable than Eſpernon; and might have been, to any other prince but Henry, a giddy, but inoffenſive favourite †. His profuſion appeared to equal that of his maſter. Having one day long detained two ſecretaries who waited for acceſs to the King; as an atonement, he transferred to them a grant of a hundred thouſand crowns, which he had juſt before received. To differ politically from Eſpernon; he affected to be violent in the cauſe of the catholic church; and became a patron of the holy confederacy, in order to advance his reputation and intereſt. In this reſpect, forgetful of the honour of his royal benefactor,

Character of the Duke of Joyeuſe,

* D'Aubigné, tom. 3. liv. 1. chap. 14. † Thuan. lib. 74. Matthieu, p. 460.

Book I.

1581.

tor, or treacherous to him; he was an example, that vanity may ſubvert the principles of duty and allegiance, as well as cool and determined ambition.

and of the Duke of Eſpernon.

The commendation and the ſtricture appertaining to the Duke of Eſpernon's character, may be collected from the following traces of it. Unlike in humour and manners to his rival, and with leſs ſimilitude to his maſter; it muſt be ſuppoſed, that Henry III. for a conſiderable time, underſtood not the real temper of this favourite. Poſſeſſed of abilities and ſtrength of mind that were ſufficient to have diſtinguiſhed him in any court or ſtate *, the favour he long enjoyed, concurred with his moroſe and ſullen diſpoſition, to render him overbearing, haughty, and inſolent; ſo that, to Henry himſelf, he became at laſt unſupportable. As he roſe to power, without the ſmooth arts or obſequious manners uſual with the ambitious; he diſdained, and was uncapable of ſupporting his great acquiſitions of intereſt and authority, by any ſuch methods †. His retainers were not gained, but ſubjected to his obedience. As if conſcious that he could not procure perſonal eſteem, or voluntary attachments; he made it his ſtudy to create dependents, by means of the large fortune he accumulated, and the many employments he obtained. His ſagacity appeared by the line he took to aggrandiſe himſelf. Inſtead of gifts in land, he aſked, and procured from Henry, a number of governments, both military and civil; and got his poſt of colonel-general of French infantry erected into a place for life, and an office of the crown. Unbeloved as a man; and generally hated as a proud favourite; he was found to be provided of ſurpriſing reſources in every extremity; and in ſeveral perilous rencounters and accidents that befel him, it appeared, that his

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 5. † Supplement to de Serres, p. 209. Brantome, tom. 4. p. 324. Thuan. lib. 80.

his fortitude equalled his foreſight. In him, nature ſeemed to have exemplified the advantages of great parts and capacity, independent of the recommendation of a good temper and agreeable manners; and it may be reckoned, that his ſeparate diſplay of the former with ſo much ſucceſs, aroſe from peculiar circumſtances; and eſpecially from the violence of the times; in which, the merit of the latter being depreciated, the want of them, to the able and the ambitious would be found far leſs prejudicial, than it commonly proves among mankind.

To ſupply the immenſe ſums expended on his favourites, and in the coſtly entertainments of his court, Henry was obliged to augment his revenues by the expedients invented by the Italian financiers; who, without regard to the particular circumſtances of ſtates, ſtudied only to increaſe the modes of civil depredation. At this time *, the method preſcribed by them was the often practiſed one of multiplying the number of judges in the courts, creating new offices, and expoſing them, together with ſome governments of places, to public ſale. In proſecuting this ſcheme of enlarging his ſubſidies, Henry ſhowed an intemperance and harſhneſs of command unuſual with him, by appearing in the court of parliament, and ordering ſeven and twenty pecuniary edicts to be promulgated in one day. In conſequence of a total diſregard to oeconomy, and of the abuſes committed under a licentious adminiſtration; the people were inſtigated to diſcontent, and their minds prepared for thoſe deeper impreſſions of diſaffection to the ſtate, and hatred of Henry, which they afterwards diſcovered. In the enſuing year, the King had another controverſy, ſimilar to that already mentioned, with a convention of the clergy at Paris, in which he likewiſe prevailed.

Money-edicts fabricated.

* Thuan. lib. 66. p. 184. ibid. lib. 74.

BOOK I.
1583.

To alleviate the odium of ſuch offenſive meaſures of government, and to ſooth the minds of the people with ſome hopes of a reformation in the ſtate, Henry convocated an aſſembly of the *Notables* at St Germain-en-laye. It conſiſted of the chief nobility, of the members of the council of ſtate, and of ſome delegates from the parliament of Paris. They divided themſelves into three * claſſes; in reſemblance of the conſtituent orders of the ſtates-general. It was *determined*, by Henry's permiſſion, that all ſuch ſtatutes as this aſſembly agreed upon, ſhould have, next to the ordinances paſſed in the ſtates, the authority of laws; and that, when the judgements of the three claſſes were framed, they ſhould be preſented to him, in order to their being ratified.

Aſſembly of the Notables.

To explain, to the ſatisfaction of the curious, the reaſons of the defects of the French juriſprudence, and of the general ſyſtem of the laws of that kingdom, would require a particular deduction of the hiſtory of them. But, it may be obſerved in general, that the remedy of this national grievance, was one main object which the preſent aſſembly of the *Notables* had in view; though they were little more ſucceſsful in it than the late ſtates at Blois, and other former conventions of them had been. In France, as in other Gothic ſtates, the laws were a compound of the antient local or feudal cuſtoms, and of the Roman juriſprudence. But, from the confuſions of the monarchy, the former of theſe were not reviſed by public authority till the reign of Charles VII.; and the authentic collection of the cuſtoms was hardly finiſhed a hundred years after, in that of Charles IX. This the famous Chancellor de l'Hoſpital had done, with an intention to reduce them to conſiſtency, and to digeſt them into a ſyſtem, founded upon general principles. He accompliſhed this great deſign, only in ſome meaſure, by publiſhing the edict of Moulins

The French municipal laws defective.

* Thuan. lib. 68. p. 206.

Moulins, without being able, in that period of civil diſcord, to perfect it. Thus, the fundamental want of a general code of common or municipal law afforded perpetual ſubject of complaint in the kingdom, about the variable and uncertain adminiſtration of juſtice. As it continued ſtill unſupplied, but by the edict of Moulins, and ſome ſubſequent ordinances of the ſtates; the maxims of law, and of judicial procedure, remained more vague and ambiguous in France, than in any other equally regular and improved government.

November.

Procedure and acts of aſſembly at St Germain.

The deliberations of the aſſembly at St Germain were, chiefly, directed to check the abuſes complained of in the court, and miniſtry *, and to regulate the police of the kingdom. But, while they applied much attention in framing ſeveral uſeful, and ſome ſuperfluous ordinances, with reſpect to theſe heads; they divided in opinion, when ſome inveterate and groſs errors of the conſtitution were pointed out, and the amendment of them propoſed. To liberate the civil authority from eccleſiaſtical fetters, it was propoſed, that all anathemas, or cenſures of the church, when pronounced againſt magiſtrates, for the execution of their duty, ſhould be deemed null and invalid in the kingdom. Though no decree could be more ſalutary to the ſtate than this, the prelates, upon pretended ſcruples of conſcience, oppoſed it; and, from their contradiction, it was dropped. The behaviour of the Cardinal of Bourbon, upon another motion ſimilar to this, ſhowed the character of the man, and the invincible bigotry of the times. With great juſtice, one of the preſidents of the parliament had expoſed the abuſes of ſanctuaries for criminals, and particularly inveighed againſt the aſylum of St Romain, in the city of Roüen. By an old and popular ſuperſtition, his robe was kept there, to expiate the crimes of offenders of every ſort; and

* Matthieu, p. 466. Thuan. lib. 78. p. 153.

BOOK I. 1583.

numberleſs applications had been made to it during the enormities of the civil wars. Upon the preſident's ſharp animadverſions on the fabulous origin of this ſanctuary, and the ſhameful impunities of crimes attending it; the Cardinal was thrown into an extaſy of zeal and indignation. Tranſported with his paſſion, he fell on his knees before the King, and implored that an adequate ſatisfaction ſhould be given him, for the impious arraignment of the laudable devotion of the people of his dioceſe. With difficulty did he ſuffer himſelf to be compoſed; and Henry was glad to extricate himſelf from this frantic aſſault, by every conceſſion.

In concurring with thoſe reformations of the court which the aſſembly of the Notables propoſed, Henry accounted it of much importance to inſiſt on enlarging the ceremonials of the royalty *. It is ſaid, that the account given him by the lady of Sir Edward Stafford, the Engliſh ambaſſador, of the great ſolemnity uſed in the court of England, made him more deſirous of eſtabliſhing ſimilar forms in his own. In this reſpect, it is certain that the two courts were ſo far from being parallel to each other, that the ſtate of the Engliſh monarch was an emblem of deſpotiſm, when compared with that of the French ſovereign. Formal attendance of the chief nobility, in the antichambers, ſtated rules for their admiſſion, and ſervice at table, upon the knee, cuſtomary in the Engliſh court, were unuſual in that of France †. Some formalities, now introduced by Henry, were not reliſhed by the French nobles. As, by attention to order, ſome benefit is often gained; the regulations extended by Henry to the Chancellor's office, and to the competency of proceſſes before different courts, proved highly advantageous to the ſtate. In conſequence of a new appointment about the latter, the King's council was no longer allowed to be the gulf of all cauſes indiſcriminately appealed to it: But, upon a regular plan, the

* Thuan. lib. 80. p. 191.

† Matthieu, p. 466.

the privy-council, and that called the great one of ſtate, and that of the finances, were effectually diſtinguiſhed from each other, and made the reſort of different affairs and proceſſes. Such a diſpoſition and capacity did Henry diſcover, to improve the order of the ſtate and government; which, in more pacific times, would have been productive of the moſt laudable and ſalutary effects. But the failure of his genius, in quelling the combuſtions congenial to the times, deprived him of the honour he might have acquired from his temper and talents as a ſovereign; and left the nation without a remedy or defence againſt the virulent ſpirit of faction ſubſiſting in it, which expoſed it to convulſions, and to ruin.

Henry's counſellors defective in reſolution and ſpirit.

His cabinet-council was compoſed of perſons who poſſeſſed not the abilities and diſpoſitions that were requiſite to invigorate the adminiſtration, and to compenſate for Henry's imbecillities in government *. From the time that Morvilliers had been ſubſtituted in the room of the Chancellor de l' Hoſpital, the prevailing party in the cabinet had eſpouſed the political maxim laid down by him; to make no open breach or diviſion among the catholics; even though a party of them, from the unjuſt pretence of religion, ſhould ſhow themſelves factious and turbulent. In conformity with this principle, the religious leagues and aſſociations, inſtigated by the friends of the Guiſes, had never been properly checked by the government; and the King, though in his fits of reflection, extremely apprehenſive of them, ſtill allowed himſelf to be perſuaded, that theſe irregular eruptions of catholic zeal could never proceed to any dangerous height, and that the principal enemies he had to fear were the proteſtants. The few opponents of this political doctrine, which ſkreened the practices of the ſeditious, were Paul de Foix, Pibrac, the Preſident de Thou, and ſome others; who reckoned upon the ſupport

* Thuan. lib. 64. p. 134.

Book I. 1583.

ſupport of the Duke of Anjou. But, from his inconſiſtency of character, and the King's diſguſt of him, their influence with Henry, and their appearance as a party, proved inconſiderable. Beſides the two favourites; Henry's cabinet-counſellors were the Marſhal de Retz, du Hurault de Chiverny, made chancellor after Birague's death; Villequiers, governor of Paris; d'O, the ſuperintendent of the finances; together with Villeroy, the ſecretary; and Bellievre *. Adhering generally to Morvillier's advice, as accommodated to the King's genius, and their own views, they excuſed the confederacies of the violent catholics, and contributed to increaſe that negligence, irreſolution, and dilatory turn of mind, to which Henry was inclined. While Joyeuſe and Eſpernon were divided in their political tract, from jealouſy of each other; the Queen-mother, hating their aſcendency over the King, was diſpoſed, in ſome meaſure, to favour the Guiſes, or, at leaſt, to moderate her ſon's ſuſpicions with reſpect to them; who now appeared leſs offenſive to her than his minions. Beſet, and influenced by ſuch counſellors, Henry, only in certain emergencies, conceived apprehenſions about the future ſafety of the ſtate; and, from want of reſolution, and the partiality of his miniſters, took no adequate meaſures for the ſuppreſſion of the violent and factious party †. The Preſident de Thou, conſulted privately by him, on ſome occaſions, and who had ſufficiently warned him of the danger of the holy leagues, died in the year 1582. The loſs of a magiſtrate of ſuch abilities and integrity was fully perceived, when the political conſequences he had predicted were ſeen to take place.

It may be reckoned ſingularly unfortunate, that, among the reſt of Henry's political reſources, his profeſſing himſelf a devotee, and being a founder of religious orders, though an affectation favoured by

* Ibid. lib. 80. p. 690.

† Thuan. lib. 75. p. 114.

1583.

by the genius of the times, ſhould have turned out unprofitable to him. In vain did he attend proceſſions, and devout parades, with trains of his courtiers. The eyes of the vulgar were not ſo much impoſed upon, but that they perceived ſomething unhallowed in theſe performances, when they ſaw them ſolemnized by ſuch carnal profeſſors. The contrariety of Henry's manners to theſe grimaces was ſo flagrant, that the ſincerity of his extravagant devotions might well be called in queſtion *. Though the champions of his new orders pronounced their elogiums of him in their books, the animadverſions of the factious preachers, were more credited. The manner in which Auger the Jeſuite wrote, his atteſtation of the King's religion was a ſpecimen of the familiar and indelicate ſtyle of theſe eccleſiaſtics. "I have felt the pulſe of this Prince, ſaid he, I have ſounded, I have trimmed his conſcience; and yet I can aſſure the world, that France, for a long time, has not had ſo religious a monarch; either in his public or private character." Debaſed by ſuch panegyriſts, Henry alſo found himſelf unſheltered by them from the malignity of the vulgar; which, inſtigated gradually by his ſecret enemies, broke forth afterwards in an outrageous manner.

The prejudices againſt Henry's adminiſtration, and the hatred of his favourites, were chiefly fomented by the partizans of the family of Guiſe; that houſe, ſo long honoured in the ſtate, and, from the ſhew of its ſuperlative zeal for the catholic church, idolized by the people. Though inclined to controul their ambition and influence, the King had not ventured to exclude the Guiſes from their rank in the ſtate †. But the interpoſition of the favourites between them and the throne, and the reſerve ſhown by Henry in employing them in military commands, afforded them ſufficient grounds

Oppoſition of the Guiſes to Henry.

* D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 1. † D'Avila, ibid. Matthieu, liv. 8. p. 679. Brantome, tom. 4. p. 129.

Book I. 1583.

grounds of diſcontent; who thought themſelves equal to all honours and preferments. The Duke of Guiſe, the head of the family, derived a reputation from his father, which endeared him to the zealous catholics. His early appearances in the late reign in the defence of Poictiers, and at the ſiege of Rochelle, flattered them with the greateſt hopes of his heroic ſpirit; which appeared to them to be confirmed by the recent inſtance of his valour in the combat at Dormans. His not being placed by the King at the head of an army in the late campaigns againſt the Hugonots, proved no diſadvantage; as the want of ſucceſs in them was aſcribed to the diſregard of his military qualifications and merit. The diſobliged and the diſcontented among the officers found an affable patron in him; and, from his careſſes and his promiſes of favour, he was ſoon denominated by them, the Father of the ſoldiers.

The brothers of the family, ſo renouned in this period of the French hiſtory, were, Henry Duke of Guiſe, Charles Duke of Mayenne, and Lewis Cardinal of Guiſe; who, though not of equal abilities and ſimilar qualities, had each of them that magnanimity, ſupported by diſtinguiſhed talents, for which their father and grandfire had been celebrated.

Character of the Duke of Guiſe.

In the firſt of them, a variety of endowments, both of perſon and mind, were united. His ſtature and aſpect were ſtately, and noble. His mien and air, expreſſive both of dignity and ſweetneſs, rendered his addreſs the moſt courteous, and inſinuating, that can be imagined. * He appeared to be formed alike for the life of a courtier and of a ſoldier; by his poliſhed manners; by the vivacity of his temper; and the vigour of his conſtitution. With every ſymptom of a liberal and generous ſpirit; the indications of the powers of

* Thuan. lib. 93. p. 248. Matthieu, liv. 8. p. 539. D'Avila, liv. 9.

1583.

of his mind, and the ſtrength of his natural genius, were no leſs conſpicuous. Elevated in his aims, bold and ſteady in the purſuit of them; he joined, to ſignal penetration and fortitude, a ſurpriſing coolneſs and patience in expecting diſtant events to favour them. In another view of his character; the merit of ſuch remarkable ingredients of it was diminiſhed, and the luſture of ſeveral of them effaced. With little veracity in his words, and artificial in his courteſy; it required that confidence he had in the powers of his addreſs to ſupport his habitual diſſimulation. Boundleſs in his ambition, licentious, but crafty in the means of promoting it; he contrived to aggravate the misfortunes of his country, and of his ſovereign; without being able to reach the object he had in view. As a great captain and a politician, he might be ranked with the firſt of his age: But the hiſtory to be given of his enterpriſes will mark his character, more as an illuſtrious than a laudable one.

Character of the Duke of Mayenne.

In the character of the Duke of Mayenne, fewer exterior attractions, leſs brilliancy of parts, but, perhaps, equal fortitude and more moderation, and a greater ſhare of virtue, were combined. The qualities * in which his brother was deficient, were eminent in him. Prudent, careful and delicate of his honour, reſerved in his promiſes, religiouſly ſtrict in the performance of them; he appeared to preſcribe the proper limits to his ambition. Slow in reſolution, as his brother was prompt and deciſive; he was no leſs firm, tho' not ſo vigorous in his purpoſes. Reckoning little on fortunate accidents, his ſchemes were the reſult of deliberate judgement and circumſpection. Carried by peculiar circumſtances beyond his political ſcope; he appeared capable of performing more than he inclined to undertake. As his character was different, ſo was his fortune from that of his brother. While the temerity of the latter made his exit tragical, the

* Thuan. ibid.

Book I. 1583. Duke of Mayenne acted long in that field which the other had only opened; and brought it to a concluſion advantageous to his intereſt, and not diſhonourable to his fame.

and of the Cardinal of Guiſe.

Lewis the Cardinal of Guiſe reſembled his elder brother in ſome traits of his character; but, in one of his profeſſion, this partial likeneſs appeared diſadvantageous *. His pride leſs concealed, his indignation againſt the court more open and violent; he was thought turbulent from ferocity of nature. Exceſſive in his ambition, precipitant in his undertakings; his boldneſs wanted its proper ſphere of activity; and his quick parts irregularly exerciſed, acquired him ſmall regard or reputation. The inſtigator of his brother's oppoſition to the court, and of his enmity to the favourites; he drew upon himſelf that ſpecial reſentment which perſonal invectives generally excite againſt their authors; and it was his fate to ſuffer, as none of his order had, for a long time, done in France, in conſequence of it.

While, from the firſt appearance of the catholic league at Peronne, an interval of ſix or ſeven years elapſed in which its flame was abated: The Duke of Guiſe and his partizans were not unattentive to keep the ſpirit of it alive in the kingdom. Every occaſion was taken by them to calumniate the court. The procedure of the ſtate being meaſured by their rule of catholic zeal, every tranſaction that tallied not with it was condemned. Thus, the protection granted by Henry to the city of Geneva, though neceſſary to bridle the ambition of the Duke of Savoy, was pronounced a deteſtable confederacy with heretics. The Duke of Anjou's league with the States of Holland was exclaimed againſt; and even his propoſed match with the Queen of England was declared from the pulpits, to

* Ibid.

to portend nothing but what was fatal to the royal blood of France, and the ſtability of its antient catholic monarchy. BOOK I. 1583.

To conclude this book, the hiſtory of foreign ſtates remains to be ſubjoined to it. As the important affairs tranſacted in ſeveral of them at this period were connected with thoſe of France, and related either to her intereſt or her glory; the review of them requires to be more particularly inſiſted upon.

CHAP. VIII.

Foreign Affairs.——Of the Netherlands.——Of Spain, Portugal, and the Weſt-Indies.——Of England.——Of the Pontificate of Gregory XIII.

Book I.

1576. Novemb. 4. Affairs of the Belgic provinces.

UPON the arrival of Don John of Auſtria in the Netherlands in quality of governor, he found that memorable union, called *the League of Ghent*, concluded between the States of Holland and thoſe of Flanders. Their anſwer to his letters informed him, that his authority could not be recognized in the provinces, unleſs he confirmed the articles of the pacification agreed upon *. As this implied the diſmiſſion of the Spaniſh troops, and a convocation of the States General, in order to compoſe the public diſſentions, whether civil or religious; compliance on his part was extremely diſagreeable. Yet, as other high projects he had in view, made it neceſſary for him to obtain the good will of the provinces, and hoping to render the popularity he would acquire in the Netherlands ſubſervient to his deſigns; he, after ſome delay, conſented to

1577. February 17.

the ratification of the articles. This agreement was confirmed by the Spaniſh Monarch, and bore the name of the *perpetual edict*. In conſequence of it, the Spaniſh troops began their march out of the Belgic territory, where they had domineered for ten years. No public joy, in any country, exceeded that expreſſed by the people of the Netherlands at beholding their departure. By their ſuperiority in the art of war to any other body of troops, the princes of Europe were taught the advantage of a regular and veteran army.

League of Ghent ratified by Don John of Auſtria.

Don

* Strada. lib. 8. Camden's hiſt. of Eliz. b. 2. p. 219.

1577.

Don John was now received into Bruxelles with the higheſt applauſe of the Belgic States and people. But this prince had not temper to act the politician, or to purſue, gradually, the ſcheme of rendering himſelf popular, and of diſuniting the Confederates and the Prince of Orange. Scarce well brooking the ſubmiſſion he had ſhown, he ſoon reſumed his natural bent, to act the independent governor and the general. Under the ſtale pretext of the deſigns of his enemies againſt his perſon, he ſeized the caſtle of Namur, muſtered up what force he could in that diſtrict, and in the province of Luxembourg, which only remained in obedience to him; and recalled to his aid ſome German regiments that had not marched far beyond the frontiers *. Upon this alteration of affairs, a party of the States at Antwerp thinking it neceſſary to have a temporary ruler among them, conferred the protection of their provinces on the Prince of Orange; under the antient title of their *Ruart*, generally known and acceptable to the people of Brabant. But this meaſure created a diviſion among the confederates; while ſome of them petitioned the catholic King for a new governor, and others agreed to elect Matthias Archduke of Auſtria, and brother to the emperor, to that dignity. His ſudden arrival, unexpected by the Prince of Orange's party, threw the confederacy into ſuch diſagreement as might have proved fatal to it; if that prince had not acted with that temper and prudence by which he governed his reſolutions, and even the aims of his ambition. It was agreed, that Matthias ſhould be choſen governor of the Netherlands, while the reſtrictions of his commiſſion, and the appointment of the Prince of Orange to the office of his lieutenant, left him little more than a nominal authority.

Change of his meaſures.

The

* Strada, ibid.

Book I. 1577.

The introduction of the Archduke Matthias into the Netherlands rendered it unſeaſonable and dangerous for the catholic King, to recal Don John's commiſſion; though his inclination to this meaſure was known. Upon various accounts jealous of him*, he detained and put to death his ſecretary Eſcovedo, when ſent into Spain, as he was found to be the inſtigator of his maſter's ambition; and a diſcovery was made of a political correſpondence he had lately entered into with the Duke of Guiſe in France. But, though Philip, in the preſent poſture of affairs, could not ſafely remove his natural brother from the Low Countries; he determined to diſable him from acting there with much advantage or reputation. He contracted his ſupplies, both of men and money. He gave him a rival of his military fame, and his popularity in the army, by engaging Alexander Farneze, ſon to Margaret, formerly governeſs in the Netherlands, and Duke of Parma, to ſerve with him in the campaigns. The new officers required for the Spaniſh troops, now ordered back from Italy, were either recommended by the latter Prince, or nominated by Philip himſelf. But the military fame Don John had already acquired in Europe, together with the peculiar favour the Pope ſhowed him, as a ſignal defender of the catholic faith, drew ſo many volunteers into his ſervice, that a conſiderable army was ſoon formed by him. On the other hand, the confederates having augmented their forces with ſeveral bands of foreign ſoldiers †, and engaged the Queen of England to a treaty with them for ſuccours, thought themſelves in a condition to ſhut him up in Namur. To their ſurpriſe, they not only found him prepared to take the field; but, as they marched careleſsly, with a great interval between their vanguard and their main battle, he attacked them in this poſition, and gained a complete victory over their army at Gemblours. While, in conſequence of it, Don John puſhed

Battle of Gemblours;

* Thuan. lib. 64. p. 138. † Acta Regia, vol. 4. p. 72. Cambden, ibid. D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 21.

pushed on his conquests; the reinforcements which the enemy received by the arrival of the English troops, and the forerunners of those of the Duke of Anjou from France, obliged him to act on the defensive. Yet, his natural ardour for action prevailing, he engaged his troops so closely with them at Rimenant near Mechlin, that a sharp engagement ensued, in which he was repulsed; though the danger of his army was greater than the loss sustained by it. It was in this combat that some Scottish companies of foot were seen to throw off their upper garments, and to fight resolutely with the men in full armour. The valour of the English troops, led by their Colonel, Norris, was no less conspicuous.

1578. January 31. and the action of Rimenant. August 1.

With this action, Don John of Austria finished his military career; and, after it, his life was but a short while prolonged. Curbed in his ambitious views, circumscribed in his appointments, as a general, bereft of half the glory he might have acquired in the field, his haughty spirit fell, from indignation, into chagrin and melancholy*, when forced to entrench his unrecruited army near Namur. Philip's known jealousy of him gave occasion to a vulgar report of his being poisoned. The commission granted by him, on the access of his distemper, to the Duke of Parma, to act as governor of the Netherlands, in case of his death, was speedily confirmed by Philip. When, by this change, his fears were removed, he no more pretended to accommodate matters with his revolted subjects in the Low Countries.

October 1. Death of Don John of Austria.

When the Duke of Parma succeeded to the government of the Belgic provinces, the affairs of the confederate States were much embroiled by the parties among them. Distinguished by that fortitude of mind which aids calm judgement, and dissipates the mist arising

Duke of Parma succeeds to him.

* Strada, lib. 10. Cambden, ibid. p. 226.

Book I.

1578. arifing from the proſpect of difficulties; Alexander Farneze, at one view, ſeemed to comprehend all the diſadvantages under which his adverſaries laboured, and to conſider the combination of ſo many jarring factions, as capable of being vanquiſhed by a much inferior power. It was not long before this judgement he made of his antagoniſts was confirmed *. Upon the death of Bolduc, the general of the ſtates, their army, refuſing to be commanded by another, ſeparated into different cantonments; and, after the departure of the Duke of Anjou into England, already mentioned, the diviſions and

1579 & 1580. mutinies of their troops ſtill increaſed. The Prince of Parma ſoon found himſelf in a capacity to act offenſively; to beat large parties of the divided army; to ſeduce others of them into his ſervice; and to extend his conqueſts over French Flanders. In the courſe of the years 1579 and 1580, affairs were ſo conducted by him, that, joining prudent negotiation to his warlike exploits, he induced the provinces of Hainault and Artois, to return to their obedience to the catholic King; and, having beſieged and taken Maeſtricht, he proceeded, by the reduction of L' Iſle, Douay, and other places, to exclude the French auxiliaries from all entrance into Flanders.

A revolution of the fortune of the States ſeemed now to be at hand. Even the provinces of Holland and Zealand, and the three others moſt firmly united with them, participated of the confuſions that diſtracted the reſt. Agitated by religious diſſenſions, many of their towns had no ſettled magiſtrates; and their garriſons ill commanded, and often unpaid, afforded no conſiderable defence. The Prince of Orange beheld the foundations of his republic, where they were beſt laid, ready to be overturned, and could find no expedient for ſafety but in the election of a ſovereign Prince and protector of the States †. To remove all jealouſies of his own ambition,

* Matthieu, lib. 7 p. 475.

† Thuan. lib. 74. p. 87.

tion, he propoſed that a foreign Prince, capable of ſupporting the ſtates, ſhould be inveſted with this ſupreme dignity. The Duke of Anjou, as, in ſeveral reſpects, preferable to others, and already marked out for their choice, was recommended to them. He prevailed with the ſtates of the union, in this manner, to aſſert their independency. To cancel all remaining impreſſions of allegiance to the Spaniſh monarch, the aſſembly of the ſtates at the Hague paſſed a ſolemn act, declaring that King Philip, by violating the privileges of the people, againſt the oath he had ſworn, had fallen from his right of ſovereignty in the Low Countries; and, that the Provinces, being now free from all fealty to him, had made a voluntary election of Francis of Valois, Duke of Anjou, for their Prince. Such ſignal judgment, and unbiaſſed reſolution, did the Prince of Orange diſcover, in applying the remedy, and procuring the ſupport which the dangerous ſituation of his country, and the conteſted cauſe of its liberty required.

The Duke of Anjou called in to the ſupport of the ſtates.

1581. July 27.

The Duke of Anjou's acceptance of the honourable offer of the ſtates having produced that peace with the proteſtants in France, which has been mentioned, numbers of the catholic and proteſtant nobility, fond of his advancement to dignity, and of a foreign expedition, reſorted to his ſtandard. His army *, conſiſting of the ſtipulated number of ten thouſand foot, and three thouſand horſe, was quickly completed. He marched to the relief of Cambray, and, by obliging the Duke of Parma to quit his entrenchments, and retire to Valenciennes, he preſerved the communication of the Low Countries with France from being cut off by that able commander. Other military ſervices, which, at this favourable juncture, he might have performed, were declined by him, who had not the capacity of perſiſting in any enterpriſe, attended with labour and

 difficulty.

* Matthieu, ibid. Sully, liv. 2.

Book I.

difficulty. Upon ſome of the French nobility withdrawing from the army, he ſuddenly broke up the campaign; and, as if he thought of making himſelf a ſovereign Prince, by a ſingle effort, or of aſcending a throne at one ſtep, he again directed his courſe to England, in order to attend the ſolicitation of his nuptial contract with Queen Eliſabeth.

Anjou inſtalled in the dignity of the Duke of Brabant. 1582.

His reception by the Engliſh Queen was ſuch, that the ſtates, perſuaded of the ſucceſs of his addreſſes, became more deſirous of inveſting him with the dignity of their ſovereign Prince *. An embaſſy was again appointed to wait upon him, at the court of England, and to ſollicit his return into the Netherlands, that he might be admitted by the ſtates in due form. He ſet out in the month of February, accompanied by the Queen, for Canterbury; and, after landing at Fluſhing with ſeveral Engliſh Lords, he was conducted by the Prince of Orange, with triumphal parade, to Antwerp. In the ſuburbs of this city, a magnificent theatre being erected, all the deputies of the provinces, and the magiſtrates of the cities, were aſſembled, to perform the ceremony of his inſtallment. The articles of an antient charter of the privileges of the people, called the *Joyful Entry*, being read, he ſwore the obſervance of them, and to govern the provinces, not as an arbitrary Prince, but with all regard to their laws and liberties. Arrayed then with the ducal mantle and coronet, he was proclaimed Duke of Brabant, and Marquis of the Holy Empire. Medals of gold and ſilver were ſtruck, with mottos expreſſive of the auſpicious event; and the King of Spain's effigy being no longer ſtamped on the coin, nor his ſeals uſed, the Duke's ſovereign titles were ſubſtituted in their place.

March 18.

While the public congratulations and feſtivities were continued on the Duke of Anjou's birth-day, an attempt was made to aſſaſſinate

* D'Aubigné, liv. 5. chap. 22.

Attempt to assaſſinate the Prince of Orange.

nate the Prince of Orange, which threw the city of Antwerp into great commotion. The populace, concluding that the French had conſpired the death of their protector, run furiouſly to arms; crying, in remembrance of St Bartholomew's maſſacre, "Behold another wedding of Paris! Let us kill the blood-thirſty race *!" But the infamous blow came from a private perſon, named Annatro, a Spaniſh banker, ſpited with poverty into which he had fallen, and eager to receive the bribe of twenty-five thouſand crowns, offered by the King of Spain for the death of this Prince. His villainy and avarice being ſuperior to his courage, he prevailed upon a domeſtic of his, only twenty years of age, to execute the deed. As the piſtol-ſhot, diſcharged by the aſſaſſin cloſe to the Prince's head, pierced through his jaw; the apparent danger of his wound increaſed the tumult and rage of the people. The French, and even the Duke of Anjou himſelf, were in danger of being made the objects of their vengeance. But, the diſcovery of the aſſaſſin, and his inſtigator, from ſome papers found about the cloaths of the former, reſtrained the commotions; and, the tranquility of the city being reſtored, the Prince, in a ſhort time, was found to be free from hazard by his wound.

In connection with this incident, the conſpiracy of Salcede, which enſued ſoon after it, may be mentioned. It was one of thoſe dark and intricate pieces of treaſon, which, though believed by many, and canvaſſed by all, ſtill appeared myſterious, and inexplicable. In times, when the exacter forms of examining evidence were not obſerved; and, eſpecially when the uſe of the torture, to wring confeſſions from the accuſed or ſuſpected, was common; inſtances of this kind frequently occur, and are found in the annals of every country †. Salcede's treaſon, confeſſed without the torture, written

* Matthieu, p. 478. Thuan. lib. 76. p. 119. † D'Aubigné, chap. 19. Satyre Menip. tom. 1. p. 125.

Book I.

at large, and ſigned by him, extended not only to the Duke of Anjou's life, but to that of the King his brother; and impeached a number of the courtiers with conſpiring to make a vacancy in the throne, by the deſtruction of them both. He, afterwards, denied this confeſſion to Henry III. himſelf. He avowed it upon the rack, and retracted it again. Henry, who was thought too negligent, upon ſuch an information of danger to himſelf and the ſtate, certainly took the wiſeſt and juſteſt courſe. Inſtead of attempting to unfold the evidence of a conſpiracy, which would have inflamed the whole kingdom, he condemned the confeſſed traitor, to ſuffer as ſuch; and left the dark calumny to be diſputed upon, by thoſe who thought themſelves intereſted in the controverſy.

In the campaign 1582, the exhauſted condition of many of the Belgic provinces retarded the military operations on both ſides, ſo that, beſides the reduction of Audenarde, by the Duke of Parma,

1582. nothing conſiderable was effectuated. But, in the concluſion of the year, the project formed by the Duke of Anjou, to render himſelf abſolute maſter of the ſtates, threatened a new cataſtrophe to their affairs. An action *, that involved treachery, ingratitude, and folly, juſtly iſſued in diſappointment and ſhame. Of ten or more of the principal cities of the union, attempted to be ſurpriſed by his French garriſons, two or three only were reduced into his power. At Antwerp, where he perſonally conducted the ignominious enterpriſe, his ſoldiers were overpowered, and many of them cut in pieces, or precipitated from the walls. At Mechlin, the ſluices being opened, and an inundation ſpread over the country, ſeveral thouſands of the French troops periſhed in the gulphs, or by cold and famine; while Anjou himſelf, baffled with his loſſes, retired to Dunkirk, and could not long maintain his footing in the Netherlands.

Anjou's attempt on the liberties of the ſtates.

1583. February 6.

The

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 2. Matthieu, p. 483.

The Prince of Orange's temperate judgment and integrity, again, were evinced, by his adviſing the council of Antwerp to a reconciliation * with the Duke of Anjou; odious as he had made himſelf by his perfidious conduct. "In ſuch an extremity of our affairs, ſaid he, let us beware of taking counſel with our paſſions." By his interceſſion with the ſtates, ſome articles of an agreement were drawn up. Before the treaty could be finiſhed, Anjou withdrew from the ſcene of confuſion and diſgrace occaſioned by him; firſt, into France, and then to Chateau-Thiery, on the German frontier. The year following, an indiſpoſition, created by chagrin, put an end to his life. In the laſt period of it, ſome ſentiments of compunction were diſcovered by him, which excited pity. Among other penitential clauſes, his teſtament bore this remarkable one with reſpect to his debts, amounting to near three hundred thouſand crowns. "Unleſs the King ſhall pleaſe to honour me with his compaſſion, I ſhall bury the fortunes of many in my tomb; and the groans uttered by the deſtitute ſhall tell, that I have neither diſcharged what I owed to God, or to man."

1583.

His death. 1584. June 10.

During the ſhock given to the affairs of the ſtates, by Anjou's enterpriſe †, the conqueſt of various places was made by the Duke of Parma, who vigilantly improved this advantage. Ghent and Bruges being forced to ſurrender, Antwerp itſelf was menaced by him with a ſiege. To conſummate the adverſity of the ſtates, the aſſaſſination of their protector, the Prince of Orange, was perpetrated at Delf, by Balthaſar Gerard, a Burgundian; worked up to the horrid villainy by a fanatical rage; and who, to teſtify his obduracy, amidſt the tortures he ſuffered, held up his hand, burnt to a cinder, to make the ſign of the croſs. In the life and exit of the Prince of Orange, the character and the fortune of ſeveral patriots

The Prince of Orange aſſaſſinated. 1584. July 11.

* Matthieu, ibid. † D'Aubigné, liv. 5. chap. 22. Thuan. lib. 79. p. 186.

BOOK I.

Traces of his character.

patriots and founders of ſtates were exemplified. Obliged to ſtruggle with hard fortune, often expoſed to ſecret aſſaults, ſuſpected, or blamed, when he ſhowed moſt wiſdom and regard to the good of his country, he calmly endured all theſe trials of his virtue, while a future age only could do juſtice to his merit; and his countrymen be generally convinced, when he fell a ſacrifice, that his life was devoted to their intereſt. From grateful acknowledgement of his ſervices, the States proclaimed his ſecond ſon, Maurice, then a youth, their Captain-general and Admiral; in abſence of the eldeſt, who had been carried into Spain, and was detained there, by the policy of the catholic King. Suſtaining, in his manhood, a character, ſimilar to his father's, in war and in peace; Maurice became a ſecond founder of the commonwealth of the States.

Affairs of Portugal and Spain.

Advanced from the church to the throne of Portugal, after the death of Don Sebaſtian in a battle with the moors of Africa, King Henry, in the imbecilities of age, and without hopes of iſſue, propounded an inquiry about the ſucceſſion to the crown, which was never determined till his death. But, within the kingdom, ſeveral factions were formed; and, without it, various Princes claimed the crown by right of inheritance. The King of Spain *, the Duke of Parma, the Ducheſs of Braganza, the Pope, the Queen-mother of France, and Don Antonia, called the *Prior of Crato*, were all competitors for it; though the three laſt had ſcarcely any plauſible title. To maintain his right, and decide this controverſy, Philip II. ordered his veteran warrior, the Duke of Alva, to march with an army into Portugal. A party of the Porutgueſe then, untimeouſly, proclaimed Don Antonio their King; who, being a natural ſon of the late King's brother, had been hitherto rejected for illegitimacy. An unequal battle betwixt Alva's trained ſoldiers and Don Antonio's

1580. June 25. Auguſt.

raw

* Thaun. lib. 70.

raw forces, iſſuing in the total defeat of the latter; Philip became maſter of the kingdom, after an expedition of about ſixty days.

Conqueſt of Portugal by Philip II.

Though unconcerned for the fortune of Don Antonio, the neighbouring powers were intereſted in this revolution, which ſubjected Portugal, and its foreign ſettlements, to a monarch already too powerful. Upon his retreating into England, and then into France, he found the courts of both diſpoſed to ſupport his intereſt *. A treaty for a league againſt Spain was propoſed between them; which, as much as Eliſabeth's propoſed match with the Duke of Anjou, employed their miniſters for ſome months of the year 1581 †. But the vanity of the Queen-mother of France diſpoſed her, without waiting the concluſion of it, to enter into a particular agreement with Don Antonio, and to furniſh him with ſome ſoldiers for an expedition to Tercera; the chief iſland of the Azores in the Atlantic ſea, where the Spaniards had been repulſed. This was only the prelude to a grand armament, which ſhe determined to ſend into that part of the world, and which was accordingly equipped the following year. It conſiſted of near ſixty ſhips of war and tranſports, with five thouſand regular troops aboard. Such remarkable ability, as well as ambition, did Queen Catherine always diſcover in promoting her favourite ſchemes; that neither the averſion of the King her ſon to the hazardous enterpriſes of war, nor the incumbred ſtate of the finances of France, proved an obſtacle to her providing ſo large a naval force, as had not been ſent by any other power but Spain into the American ſea.

1581. June.

A naval armament, by France, for the Weſt-Indies.

The Spaniſh Monarch, no leſs ſtrenuous to oppoſe this expedition, ſent out a fleet, under the command of the Marquis de Santa Cruz,

1582.

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 21. † Thuan, lib. 75.

Book I.

July 26.

Cruz, ſuperior to that of the French; if not in the number, at leaſt in the bulk of the veſſels. A ſea-fight, more famous than any that had happened in thoſe ſeas, enſued; in which, the Spaniards * having the advantage of the weight of cannon, proved victorious. Strozzi, the French commander, being mortally wounded, and his ſhip ſunk, eight of his navy were taken by the enemy, and more than two thouſand of his ſoldiers deſtroyed. The count de Briſſac, eſcaping with eighteen veſſels, carried the unhappy tidings of the defeat to France. The loſs of ſuch a naval armament was the more deplorable, when it was conſidered, that no one equal to it had ever been fitted out by the French for any enterpriſe in the Weſt-Indies; and that the expence of it far exceeded the coſt of other nations in planting ſome of their beſt American colonies. Thus, when ſchemes of national intereſt were utterly forgotten, the motives of vanity and ambition prompted the court of France to engage raſhly in combating the power of Spain, in a part of the world, where her navies and her ſettlements much ſurpaſſed thoſe of any other ſtate †. In ſpite of the diſaſter that attended the attempt, it was proſecuted, by new ſuccours being granted the following year to Don Antonio; but with no better ſucceſs. In France, however, this nominal prince found an aſylum. In the wreck of his fortune, he had only ſaved a ſaddle, emboſſed with precious ſtones, which ſerved him in place of all other pageantries of ſtate; while he bore the title of King of Portugal, and was approached on the knee by his domeſtics. The Queen of England concurred with France in affording him ſome aſſiſtance, and afterwards undertook an expedition, in his name, to the coaſts of Portugal.

The French defeated in a ſea-engagement with the Spaniards.

1583, July.

Affairs of England.

Upon reſuming the narrative of the affairs of England, it is to be remarked, that Queen Elizabeth began to diſpenſe with that caution

* Ibid. † Ibid. lib. 78. p. 157.

caution ſhe had obſerved in her conduct with reſpect to Spain. Though inclined, from prudential maxims, not to provoke her enemies, yet her political ſituation, and her foreſight of danger, often rouſed her to ſpirited action. Upon the appointment of Don John of Auſtria to the government of the Netherlands, apprehending the execution of a ſcheme of the Pope's for embroiling her kingdom, by his marriage with the Queen of Scots, ſhe no longer heſitated to enter into a treaty with the States *. A conſiderable ſum of money was given them as a preſent, and the loan of a hundred thouſand pounds furniſhed, upon ſecurity of ſome towns in Holland, for the repayment of it. No fewer than ſeven thouſand of her troops joined the army of the States; and other articles, of a defenſive confederacy with them, were ſettled. To palliate this meaſure to the court of Spain, ſhe declared herſelf, reluctantly, forced upon it, by Philip's violent government of the Netherlands, that ſubverted the commerce of its cities, in which England was concerned; and inſiſted particularly upon the certain proof ſhe had of Don John's correſpondence with the Scottiſh Queen, and the domeſtic enemies of her Kingdom. Upon this laſt article, ſhe diſcovered her reſentment to be chiefly founded, uninformed, as it would appear, of Philip's diſpoſition to curb the ambitious projects of his brother. The part ſhe now acted with Spain was ſimilar to her conduct towards France, during ſeveral periods of the former civil wars; and it was ſurpriſing how each of theſe powers found it long inconvenient to come to an open rupture with her.

Book I.

1578.

It has been already obſerved what political purpoſes were anſwered, by her allowing the Duke of Anjou's propoſals of marriage with her to be carried on †. The two viſits he made to England, and

1579.

* Camden. b. 2. p. 221. Acta Regia, vol. 4. Matthieu, p. 477.

† Camden. ibid. p. 232.

Book I.

her reception of his addreſſes, need not be particulariſed. Whether, in the latter, ſhe acted from paſſion, or from policy, or from a mixture of both, hiſtory has not ventured to determine, with certainty. What ſhe has reported to have ſaid to Bodin, Chancellor to the Duke of Anjou, upon the ſubject, ſhowed her quaintneſs in repartee. Upon his intimating to her Majeſty, that his hiſtorical work would be defective, for want of the proper explication of her conduct about the marriage, and that his beſt account of it would be found fault with: "It will certainly be ſo, replied Elizabeth; and I will tell you what will be ſaid of your conjectures: A knave having invented a ſtory; a fool has put it in print." But, however ſhe acted this ſcene of dalliance with the Duke of Anjou, without fearing the reſentment of the French court, for her way of finiſhing it; it is certain that ſhe had ſufficient reaſon to dread the
1580. indignation of Spain againſt her. The attempt upon Ireland, tho' a weak, and ill concerted one, and made in the Pope's name, was deſigned as a prelude to the greater perturbation of her kingdom, that was meditated by the Catholic King. The Engliſh * ſeminaries of Popiſh prieſts, which he eſtabliſhed at Douay, and other places in Flanders, ſhowed the formed ſcheme he had to inflame the prejudices of her catholic ſubjects, and to encourage their plots and combinations againſt her perſon and government. Finding ſo convenient a refuge, the devotees expelled from England, exerted their utmoſt zeal and induſtry in watching over the catholic vineyard there, committed to them. On account of their agency, Elizabeth was obliged to execute the penal laws againſt the papiſts; which tended to ſour the minds of many of them, and to provoke others to reſentment. To what machinations againſt her, the ſcholaſtic caſuiſtry they were taught, could inſtigate them †, appeared, afterwards,

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 1. p. 577. Camden, b. 3. p. 307. † Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 30.

wards, by the trial of William Parry, for a treaſonable deſign to aſſaſſinate the Queen. BOOK I.

The ſubſerviency of theſe popiſh votaries to the ambitious ſchemes of the catholic King, became remarkable, about this time, not only in England and the Netherlands, but in various other countries of Europe. Several turbulent deſigns were ſet on foot by them. The Jeſuites * of Caſtile and Portugal broached a doctrine, which was every where propagated by the emiſſaries of Rome; that the catholic church ought to *have but one Paſtor, and one King*. It was recommended under the name of the Grand Scheme; and was certainly the favourite one of Philip II. Hence, the moſt active of the religious orders were gained over, and attached to his intereſt. By their incitement of the catholic leagues in France, and of plots and conſpiraces in other kingdoms; the ambitious monarch, artfully, paved his way for the execution of theſe mighty enterpriſes, for univerſal empire; in which, a few years after this, the whole ſtrength of his extenſive dominions were employed by him. To counteract the progreſs of his deſigns, a defenſive league was propoſed among the proteſtant ſtates by the King of Navarre †. It appears, from the inſtructions given to his envoy, de Segur, that apprehenſions were entertained of an agreement being made by the Pope and the King of Spain, to divide the empire of Europe between them. 1583. 1583, July.

The pontificate of Gregory XIII. which now drew near its concluſion, was ſignaliſed by an embaſſy, ſent from the Emperor of Japan to his Holineſs. The credential letters, written in Latin, were inſcribed, "*To the adorable Vicegerent of the celeſtial King, and the moſt holy chief Paſtor of the church.*" This ſhowed the

 ſucceſs

* Thuan. lib. 79. p. 175. † Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 523.

BOOK I.

New Kalendar by Pope Gregory XIII.

ſucceſs of the miſſion of the Jeſuites to India. Another event teſtified * the attention of Gregory to the uſeful improvements of aſtronomy. By the application of them to the old *Julian* kalendar, a neceſſary and memorable reformation of it was made in the year 1582. Gregory's name was juſtly affixed to it, and muſt remain in the annals of ages.

* Ibid. lib. 76.

THE

THE HISTORY OF FRANCE.

REIGN OF HENRY III.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

Duke of Guiſe's Ambition and Arts.——Manifeſto of his Partizans.——Calumnies ſpread by them.——Henry's timid Oppoſition to the League.——Its Progreſs in the Kingdom.——Origin of the Council of Sixteen in Paris.——The King's ſhameful Conceſſions to the League.

IN regular governments, where violent parties prevail, nothing has a more fatal tendency, than when the meaſures of the ſtate are accommodated to the principles of any particular faction. It is the certain mark of the declining condition of the government; when

1584.

Book II. 1584. when this falſe policy becomes neceſſary to ſupport it. The weight of faction, increaſed by it, will preſs with redoubled force, upon the fundamental powers of the ſtate; till the whole be unhinged, and thrown into diſorder.

During the courſe of Henry's reign, the government, in order to avoid a colliſion with the faction of the league, had acted, chiefly, upon the principles of its partizans. The checks given to them, were too weak, to have any conſiderable effect; and the expedients uſed to divert the eruptions of their fanatical zeal, had ſuch an appearance of timidity, as to encourage, rather than to repreſs, the returns of them *. In the temporary calm, that took place, the Duke of Guiſe beheld the ſpirit of his party ſtill undiminiſhed; and was convinced, that, to awake its former vigour, ſome popular argument only was wanting; which the courſe of time, and events, would
June 10. certainly furniſh. The death of the Duke of Anjou, already related, was ſuch an event as he wiſhed for; to clothe with ſome pretext his ambitious purpoſe of ſhaking the government of Henry III.

In this inſtance it was proved, that the deceaſe of the heir of a hereditary monarchy is, generally, a momentuous incident. It became ſo now, in the caſe of the Duke of Anjou; who had occaſioned various diſſenſions in the French court and ſtate. It is allowed by moſt of the hiſtorians, that even his ambitious projects, and eſpecially, his late enterpriſes in the Low Countries, had contributed to controul the progreſs of the catholic leagues, by gratifying the paſſion of the military chiefs, for employment in the field. His name, and rank in the kingdom, to which the nobility paid a deference, daſhed the hopes of the principal inſtigators of the domeſtic factions. From the conſideration of it, the Duke of Guiſe was believed

* Matthieu, liv. 8 p. 491.

believed to have reſtrained his ambition; when the catholic leagues, eight years before, invited him to give full ſcope to it, "I muſt, take care, ſaid he, how I attempt any thing openly *, while the King's brother ſurvives. But, if one day, I come to ſee the laſt of the race of *Valois* upon the throne, I know well what is to be done." As if he had been, calmly, expecting this diſtant contingency; when Anjou returned, from Flanders, with ſymptoms of a diſeaſed conſtitution; "It is now time, he was heard to ſay, that I ſhould try what my moſt courteous addreſs can perform with the old Cardinal of Bourbon." His accuteneſs had pointed out to him this line of procedure, which was highly political; when, by Anjou's deceaſe, and the King's want of iſſue, men's thoughts began to be turned upon the heir of the crown, by collateral ſucceſſion. In the perſon of the Cardinal, he artfully conceived, not only that a popular ſcreen to his ambition might be held forth; but that the argument of his nearer propinquity of blood, might be oppoſed to his nephew's claim to the crown, by repreſentation. The ſimple prelate, with whom the conſideration of the King of Navarre's religion was a powerful motive, was ſoon perſuaded to own his title to the ſucceſſion; which neither himſelf, nor others, had before regarded to be in any degree valid.

1584. Excited to higher ambition, by the Duke of Anjou's death,

the Duke of Guiſe begins to embroil the ſtates.

To form this plan for embroiling the ſtate, Henry, Duke of Guiſe, was inſtigated by the predominant motive of ambition, encouraged by circumſtances, that ſeemed to promiſe him ſucceſs. The diſregard of the King, expreſſed by many; the experiments already made of the power of that faction, of which he was the head; together with the tameneſs of the government, under the inſults offered to it; conſpired to fill him with hopes of turning the preſent opportunity to his aggrandizement †. The memory of the King of Navarre's

* Preface a la Memoires de la Ligue, tom 2. Matthieu, ibid. lib. 81. Mem de Sully, in a note, liv. 1. p. 45.

† Thuan.

Book II. 1584.

Navarre's former rejection of his profered aſſiſtance, alſo, diſpoſed him to diſplay the weight of his influence, in oppoſition to the title of that Prince. The licentious harangues of the preachers, about the eventual ſucceſſion to the crown, and the publications on the ſubject, propagated the alarm of danger to the kingdom *. An artful piece, writ by d' Orleans, an advocate, under the borrowed name of an Engliſh refugee; repreſented the cruelties exerciſed againſt the catholics, in that kingdom. An improvement was made on this forged argument of terror. Prints were caſt off, and expoſed in ſeveral places of Paris; which delineated the tortures inflicted on the ſons of the Holy Church, by their perſecutors in England. When collected to ſurvey thoſe doleful figures, the populace ſtood, in fixed aſtoniſhment; ſome perſons were ready to give the explication of them, and to add, with a depreſſed voice, "In this ſame manner, ſhall we be treated in France, if the King of Navarre ſhould ſucceed to the crown." When the copper-plates were ſeized by the King's authority; the ſame pictures, ſketched on wooden tablets, were hung out in the porticos of the churches; till the Engliſh envoy inſiſted to have them ſuppreſſed.

Having, by ſuch preliminary artifices, endeavoured to revive the abated ferment about religion; the Duke of Guiſe proceeded to ſound the inclinations of his principal friends, and of the inſtigators of faction †. He was ſo ſucceſsful, that, in a meeting of them, Decemb. 31. at Joinville, in the end of the year, the requiſite form of their union, and even the terms of their confederacy, were agreed upon. Both of them were founded on the plan of protecting the catholic church and ſtate of France, againſt all dangers that threatened it. After a preamble to this purpoſe, and about the riſk of the catholic faith, by the eventual ſucceſſion of a heretical Prince, the written inſtru-

Secret confederacy of the Duke's friends at Joinville.

* Thuan. ibid. P. Daniel, tom. 9. p. 169. † Thuan. ibid. Matthieu, liv. 8. p. 492.

inſtrument of their aſſociation declared their unanimous reſolution, to adopt the claim of the Cardinal Bourbon, and to ſupport it, to the utmoſt of their power. In caſe of his acceſſion to the throne, it was ſtipulated, that the treaty of Cateau Cambreſis, ſhould be renewed with Spain; in order to extirpate, by force, all ſectaries, and to eſtabliſh the acts of the council of Trent, in the kingdom. Reſtitution was to be made by him, of all places taken by the French, in the late wars of Flanders, and, eſpecially, of the city of Cambray. Their union with the catholic King was declared to be inviolable, and to comprehend that of the catholic Lords in France, with the heirs of his crown. All leagues with his Chriſtian Majeſty, or any other power, without the conſent of the confederates, were diſavowed. The whole tenor of this act of union ſhowed it to be fabricated by foreign intereſt. The parties preſent, beſides the three brothers of Guiſe, were the agents of Spain, and thoſe of the Duke of Lorain. The engagement of Philip II. to furniſh, immediately, fifty thouſand crowns, a-month, and other requiſite ſupplies, teſtified, how acceptable it was to him, to promote the combuſtion of a neighbouring kingdom.

Remarks upon it.

To the intelligent, the import of this famous league afforded juſt ſubject of animadverſion. In any view, it appeared to them, to be an unprovoked and unwarrantable combination, againſt a ſovereign; as culpable for exceſſive lenity, as any meaſure of his government. To juſtify the aſſumption of arms, from the danger of the King's want of iſſue, when married, and only at the age of thirty-three; ſeemed a ſporting with all the tyes of loyalty. The ſubſtitution of the Cardinal of Bourbon, above ſeventy years of age, as preſumptive ſucceſſor to Henry III. was reckoned the groſſeſt inſult on the underſtandings of mankind. Even by the loweſt of them, the political uſe of the pageantry of his name might well be comprehended. The rules of government, preſcribed to this nominal ſucceſſor, and

Book II. 1585.

the conceſſions made to Spain, in important points of the national honour, and intereſt, proved, that the degradation of the royalty was the chief aim of the confederates *. By the wits, it was ſaid, "that the Cardinal's behaviour and appearance reſembled that of an old trained camel, that ſtoops down to receive the arbitrary load of his driver, though more than ſufficient to fix him to the ground."

Notwithſtanding the ſcheme of the catholic league evidently admitted of this conſtruction, the Duke of Guiſe truſted in his ability to render it the idol of the people; and the ſource of a formidable inſurrection againſt Henry III. He knew that fictitious arguments, when accommodated to the prejudices of the multitude, prove, always, more powerful with them, than truth, and juſt reaſoning. Converſant in the methods of inflaming their paſſions; he ſcrupled not to vouch thoſe calumnies, which are the food of the blind animoſity, and rage of the common people †. The King's appointment of the Duke of Eſpernon to hold a conference with the King of Navarre; the prolongation of the time for the ſurrender of the ſurety-towns, in the hands of the proteſtants; the allowance of an aſſembly of their chiefs, at Montauban; and the King of Navarre's diſpatching De Segur, to ſome foreign courts; though occurrences hardly liable to miſrepreſentation, were ſufficient to give credit to the moſt improbable falſehoods.. From them was inferred the King's acting in concert with the heretical ſucceſſor, and his permitting a powerful confederacy of the proteſtant Princes, to vindicate his right to the crown. To ſtrengthen the impreſſion of this laſt aſſeveration, the copies of a treaty, under the title of the *Concordat of Magdebourg*, were printed; which ſome curates, and preachers read publicly, to their congregations, to convince them, that

Calumnies ſpread by the votaries of the league.

* D'Avila, liv. 7. p. 606. Ibid. p. 135.

† Matthieu, ibid. p. 495. Mem. de la ligue, tom. 1.

that the catholic ſanctuary betrayed by the King, was on the point of being overthrown by the bloody counſels of her enemies, at home, and abroad. By ſuch impoſitions on their credulity, the people were, generally, perſuaded that the King of Navarre, who had advanced no public claim to his rank in the ſtate, was prepared to invade the throne, with open force.

The King of France was not unadvertiſed of what paſſed in the meeting at Joinville, and of the turbulent deſigns purſued by the confederates, in conſequence of it *. But the juſt apprehenſions he entertained, with reſpect to their combination, were allayed by the judgment paſſed upon it, by the members of his council, moſt truſted by him. They repreſented to him that ſome allowance was to be made, on this occaſion, for the zeal of the catholic Lords, prompted, as it was, by their fears of the King of Navarre's ſucceſſion to the crown †; to whom the court of parliament had, lately, preſented the lilies, in token of his indiſputable title. Other circumſtances, they alſo alledged, had contributed to produce the preſent commotion; which, being greater in appearance, than in reality, would ſoon vaniſh, like the former league of Peronne. They urged, that reſentment on his Majeſty's part, would rather be hurtful, and might turn the ſpirit of inſurrection, which, evidently, had a different object, againſt his perſon, and government. So cool a judgment pronounced by them, upon a manifeſt danger of the ſtate, not only ſhowed their attatchment to their political creed, that has been mentioned, about catholic inſurrections; but likewiſe, as ſeveral hiſtorians remark, that the Queen-mother had ſuffered herſelf to be dazzled with the Duke of Guiſe's apology, for ſupporting the title of the Cardinal of Bourbon. It was ſignified to her, that this deviation from the order of ſucceſſion might pave the way to the advancement

Henry perſuaded to overlook the combination of the catholics.

* Thuan. lib. 80. p. 191. † Matthieu, ibid. p. 495. Thuan. ibid.

Book II. 1585.

vancement of the iſſue of her own daughter, the Dutcheſs of Lorain. With one ſo actuated by the ſpirit of political intrigue, as Catherine was; the ſuggeſtion would have a conſiderable influence. It is obſerved, in like manner, that the Duke of Guiſe, by exerting his verſatile genius, had the art to perſuade ſeveral of the nobles, that his views were not different from thoſe, they were underſtood to retain. To the loyal, he declared that his ſole purpoſe was, to reduce the inſufferable domination of the King's minions. To the diſcontented, he pretended to contend, only, for a more equal diſtribution of the employments of the ſtate. While, among his chief confederates, ſome were made believe, that he meant to defend the throne, from the acceſſion of a hugonot Prince, without reſpect of particular perſons; others, that he would promote the claim of the daughters of France; and many were convinced, that he would make uſe of the powerful aid of the catholic King, for his own political ends: Over the face of the catholic league was thrown that appearance of ambiguity, which confounded the judgements of the generality of people, with reſpect to the deſign of it; and, by keeping the different parties in ſuſpenſe, favoured his ſecret meaſures for its advancement.

A mind that is deſtitute of reſolution, often, yields to arguments, which are not convincing to it. Though Henry's ſenſibility, and the anxiety of his temper with reſpect to preſent dangers, led him to an opinion of the deſigns of the Duke of Guiſe, very different from that of his council; his dread of encountering difficulties, ſtill, reſtrained him from acting according to his ſentiments; and made him, eaſily, give way to a further trial of experiments, which had been already found too weak for the virulent growth of ſedition. This contrariety of his reſolution, to his judgment, appeared, on this occaſion, in his correſpondence with the King of Navarre *.

Upon

* Memoires de la ligue, tom. 1. p. 175. Matthieu, ibid.

Upon the repeated informations, that were given him, of the rebellious purpoſes of the votaries of the league, he could not help writing to that Prince, that he was convinced, in ſpite of all their pretences, that their enterpriſe was againſt his crown, and perſon, and that they wanted to aggrandize themſelves, by the total ruin of the ſtate. At the ſame time, he appeared to ſhrink back from this judgment; by requiring the King of Navarre to attempt no oppoſition, but to allow a fuller detection to be made, in the eyes of the people, of their violent deſigns. The like timidity was ſhown by him, in the reception of the deputies of the States of Holland; who came to make him the honourable offer of the ſovereignty of their provinces. From dread of exaſperating the factious, he ſtopt them on their way; and when allowed, with privacy, to proceed to Paris, he quickly diſmiſſed them, with ſome verbal and ambiguous aſſurances of his friendſhip for the States.

Book II. 1585.

February.

After a ſecret proviſion of arms, and the levy of men in ſome provinces, the partizans of the league no longer concealed their ſeditious confederacy. A number of the nobleſſe of Picardy repaired to Roüen, where the Cardinal of Bourbon, by concert, had retired, and brought him, under their eſcort, to Peronne; as a place auſpicious for the birth of the former inſurrections *. Here they publiſhed their manifeſto; which nearly coincided, in its date, with an arret iſſued by the King, againſt levying ſoldiers, without his command. The ſtile of the latter was ſo feeble, and derogatory to his dignity as a Sovereign; that the moſt loyal themſelves were damped by it. The former, with profeſſions of allegiance, and duty to the King, conveyed an emphatic and popular addreſs to the paſſions of men; upon the ſubject of the imminent danger of their religious eſtabliſhment, and of the flagrant abuſes of their civil go-

Manifeſto of the league publiſhed. March 31.

vern-

* Memoires, ibid. p. 57.

Book II.
1585.

vernment, by the arbitrary and inſolent ſway of the favourites. The mention of the union with Spain, which might have given offence, being ſuppreſſed; it bore only the titles and deſignations of the French catholic Lords, who had ſworn to maintain the confederacy. It expreſſed, in ſtrong terms, their firm and zealous reſolution, to venture their lives and fortunes in the cauſe of religion, and the public good; and their confidence, to find the means, and neceſſary aids, to accompliſh their purpoſes. To create the more terror to their opponents, a liſt of the foreign princes, on whoſe aſſiſtance they could depend, was diſplayed, in a ſeparate paper.

The tranſmiſſion of ſuch a manifeſto, through the cities and provinces of the kingdom, could not fail to make a powerful impreſſion. The ſlackneſs of Henry's adminiſtration, together with the hatred of his minions, had begot a contempt of the court, among the veteran officers of the army, diſguſt among the nobles, and obloquy and licentiouſneſs among the common people. Without this fatal circumſtance, the argument of religion, alone, would not have excited a formidable inſurrection. But, under the pretext of it, men, of all different claſſes, found it eaſy to hide their turbulent ſpirit, their thirſt of military promotion, and their hopes of repairing their fortunes by the public broils. To many of the needy chieftains, the piſtoles of Spain, diſburſed by the Duke of Guiſe, and his boundleſs promiſes, were an irreſiſtible bait; and the general opinion entertained of his great abilities, in conducting every public ſcheme, made the embracing of his party be deemed no leſs ſafe than lucrative *. Among the courtiers, and thoſe who had enjoyed a conſiderable ſhare of the King's bounty, ſome deſertions to the league enſued. In the provincial governments, its aſſociates appeared to increaſe; and, as generally happens, while the moderate were

* D'Avila, ibid.

were aſtoniſhed, and the peaceable were afraid, and the court diſcovered its ſurpriſe and irreſolution; the adherents of the league were ſo augmented, that the Duke of Guiſe, in a letter to the Duke of Nevers, took occaſion to boaſt, "that not a ſingle man, on whom he reckoned, had failed him."

But induſtrious, as the Duke of Guiſe and his agents were, and well calculated, as the league itſelf may be reckoned, to diffuſe the ſpirit of inſurrection; more time was required, to mature the counſels of their party, and to advance their military preparations. Indebted, by computation, to the value of his eſtates, the Duke depended, entirely, on the ſubſidies of Spain, for the raiſing of ſoldiers. Such levies, as he was capable of making, with that aſſiſtance, and in concert with his couſin, the Duke of Lorain, could only be drawn together, on the frontiers of the kingdom *. At the preſent time, four thouſand foot, and a thouſand horſe, the hiſtorians agree, were all the troops which he had in readineſs to take the field. Surpriſed to find him ſo inſufficiently prepared, Beauvais-Nangis aſked the Duke, at Châlons, what he could pretend to do with ſuch an inconſiderable force; if his Majeſty marched directly with his troops to attack him? "What elſe, replied Guiſe, but to retire quickly to Germany; and there wait for a more favourable occaſion." This precipitation was not imputed to the Duke of Guiſe; but to a part of the confederacy. The † all powerful inſtigation of the Spaniſh ambaſſador, who diſtributed the gold of his maſter, prevailed over that chieftain's more deliberate counſels. Anxious about the affairs of the Netherlands, and dreading, upon the deputation of the ſtates to the King, that he might be induced, from policy, to undertake their protection; Mendoza urged the ſpeedy aſſumption of arms, in a manner, which the Duke found he could not oppoſe. Engaged

The Duke of Guiſe not ſufficiently prepared;

is obliged to begin his enterpriſe.

* Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 88. Matthieu p. 500. † Thuan. D'Avila, ibid.

Book II. 1585.

ged too deeply with his party, to remain maſter of all the reſolutions; while he endeavoured to guide them, he was obliged, occaſionally, to obey the dictates of his adherents *. Upon the firſt moiety of his annual penſion of two hundred thouſand crowns being paid him, and ſome money conſigned for the foreign levies; he diſpatched letters to the Swiſs colonel, Fifer, to Baſſompiere, and other military ſtipendaries of Germany, to fulfil their contracts with him; and be ready to advance with their troops, to the borders of France.

In conſequence of theſe meaſures; a body of forces being ſoon collected in the frontier provinces of Champagne and Burgundy; with the aſſiſtance of the Duke of Lorain, Guiſe poſſeſſed himſelf of the garriſons of Toul, and Verdun; but his attempt on Metz, which was the key of the kingdom, on that border, failed. In the mean time, the diſperſed votaries of the league, endeavoured, by conſpiracy and ſurpriſe, to render themſelves maſters of various towns and citadels, in other parts of the kingdom. Beſides many ſmall places †, theſe attempts were made in the great cities of Lyons, Bourdeaux, and Marſeilles. The latter of them was, in a few days, loſt, and recovered. Matignon, by ſpirited management, ſaved Bourdeaux. But the ſucceſs of the conſpirators, at Orleans, Angers, and Bourges, was ſome compenſation for their other diſappointments.

While the chief confederates, thus only collecting their ſtrength, were under conſiderable anxiety and diffidence, about the ſucceſs of their various enterpriſes; it was the opinion of many, that Henry, by barely aſſuming the appearance of martial reſolution, might have prevailed in ſuppreſſing the whole vigour of the inſurrections. But

* Thuan. ibid.

† Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 74.

1585.

But his divided, partial, and intimidated, counſellors, again concurred, without heſitation, to betray him. The two rival favourites, Joyeuſe and Eſpernon, though the avowed objects of the vengeance of the league, in this critical occaſion, oppoſed each other; and the former, by joining that party of the King's council, which, in reality, eſpouſed the principles of the confederacy, but not the faction of the Guiſes, was enabled to carry his point *. The power of the confederacy was ſo magnified by them, and the extention of the flame of the league through all the great cities, as well as the capital of the kingdom, was repreſented in ſuch a light to the King, that he was perſuaded there was no refuge for him, but in the propoſal of a treaty. The advice of the few counſellors, who ſhowed their loyalty and ſpirit, to be equal to any trial of them, was overruled; and, in oppoſition to the arguments of Noailles, Biſhop of Aix, of the Marſhal d'Aumont, and de Rambouillet; the daſtardly reſolution, for accommodating matters with the inſurgents, was embraced; and the method of accompliſhing it reſigned to the agency of Queen Catherine.

Henry's council divided into parties.

To array the catholic league with more terror; its partizans had applied for the ſanction of the ſovereign Pontiff, to their enterpriſe. The Cardinal de Pellevé, afterwards ſo noted for his bigotted adherence to it, ſolicited this point at the court of Rome. Matthieu, a Jeſuite of Lorain, was the indefatigable courier employed by him. But Gregory XIII. whoſe great age inclined him to peace and repoſe, choſe to keep the affair in ſuſpenſe; and, though ſome verbal approbations of the league were † extracted from him; he perſiſted in declaring, in anſwer to their ſolicitations, that, "until he could ſee more clearly into the buſineſs, neither bulls nor briefs ſhould be granted by him." With all popular factions, bold aſſeverations eaſily ſupply the place of truth. The Pope's words, with exaggerations,

The Pope's ſanction ſought for by the league

April 10.

* Matthieu, Thuan. ibid.

† Matthieu, ibid. p. 494.

Book II. 1585.

were reported in letters, from the zealous agents of the league at Rome; and ſerved, inſtead of the bulls, to cheriſh the ſpirit of that party. But the Duke of Nevers, whoſe zealous attachment to the holy ſee was known, required more ſatisfaction, upon the point of conſcience; and, to obtain it, repaired himſelf to the court of Rome. When he found there, that his Holineſs was diſpoſed to deliver no formal judgement about the league; he declared himſelf at freedom to renounce it. Though it was the opinion of the more intelligent, that emulation of the Duke of Guiſe's authority, as much as any conſcientious motive, induced him to this change; his example had a conſiderable influence upon ſeveral of the nobles. Among the lower claſs of people, however, the approbation of the Holy Father was ſuppoſed; and the name of the catholic league itſelf, ſo conſonant to their prejudices, was ſufficient to create a general attachment to it.

Origin of the council of ſixteen, in Paris.

Of this laſt circumſtance, the ſpontaneous origin of the *council of ſixteen*, in Paris, about this time, was a proof. Clandeſtine meetings, ſuch as had been detected, ſome years before, were revived among ſome of the lower eccleſiaſtics, and the citizens of the metropolis *. The college of Fortet, belonging to the Sorbonne, was, afterwards, found to be the place of their rendezvous. The accuſations of the King and government, vented by the clerical declaimers among them were liſtened to, by the credulous burgeſſes, with enthuſiaſtical admiration. They believed them, an oracular call to extraordinary efforts of zeal, for the cauſe of the endangered church and ſtate. They took oaths, to live and die together, in defence of the true faith. They entered into an aſſociation for this purpoſe; and appointed, for each of the ſixteen wards of Paris, one correſpondent out of their number, to engage partizans among their fellow

* Ibid. p. 492.

fellow citizens. The confederacy of the Pariſians, promoted by them, adminiſtered ſupport to the friends of the league, in other cities; and ſurpaſſed, in flaming zeal, its warmeſt adherents.

Situation of the King of Navarre in the commotions of the league.

In the midſt of the public combuſtion, the King of Navarre, pointed out as the ſource of it, and branded in the writings of the confederates, as the grand enemy of the ſtate, was at a loſs in determining, what meaſures he ought to purſue. To abjure his religion, to renounce his connection with the proteſtants, and to throw himſelf on the will of a court, irreſolute, divided into parties, and that appeared incapable of acting, but in the ambiguous tract of expedients; conſiſted neither with his honour nor his ſafety. As one, worthy of his high rank in the ſtate; he choſe a more honourable way of recommending himſelf to the King and nation, than that of appearing to catch at the hopes of his precarious ſucceſſion to the crown; when, by becoming the dupe of them, he would diſable himſelf, from acting with the meaſure of ſtrength he had, for the honour and preſervation of both *. On the other hand; after having offered all the aſſiſtance in his power, to guard the rights of the royalty, and uſed every argument to animate the King, to lay aſide diſmay, and truſt to the natural loyalty of the French nation, for the defence of his prerogative; he found himſelf reſtrained, by Henry's injunction, from appearing in the field. In this ſituation, ſo diſagreeable to one of his warm affections, and active ſpirit; he could only, for the preſent, have recourſe to public proteſtations and remonſtrances. Philip du Pleſſis Mornay, celebrated no leſs for his political than his literary knowledge, was the penman of almoſt all his memorials. In the *Henriade* of Voltaire; his merit is juſtly repreſented under the character of *Mentor*; or the ſage guide of the young hero. He diſplayed a peculiar talent in

The public memorials drawn up by Du Pleſſis Mornay.

* Thuan. lib. 81.

Book II. 1585.

expreſſing ſuch ſentiments, on the ſubjects he touched, as correſponded with the heroic magnanimity of the King of Navarre. His ſtile, clear, nervous, correct, and poliſhed, beyond the proſe of the age, expoſed the rudeneſs of moſt of its productions; and the cloſeneſs of his reaſoning proved the ſuperior acuteneſs of his genius, in managing every part of the controverſy with his antagoniſts of the league. The delicacy obſerved, through the whole, with reſpect to the faults of Henry III. is particularly remarkable in theſe controverſial performances; which may be ſtill reckoned the beſt model of that kind of writing, for exactneſs, propriety, and juſt argument. Having the ſtamp of true genius upon them; the ſtile itſelf appears unantiquated; while that of the other memoirs of the times ſeems both obſolete and tedious.

From du Pleſſis's pen, two remarkable pieces iſſued at this time *; one intitled, *An Advertiſement* about the aim of the Guiſes in their recourſe to arms; and the other, *A declaration*, by the King of Navarre, againſt the calumnies publiſhed againſt him. In the latter, the reply made with reſpect to that Prince's religion, and to his impeachment, as a perſecutor of the catholic church, is framed with peculiar addreſs and judgment. To give form and ſolemnity to his proteſtation, about his readineſs to ſubmit the judgment of his religious principles, to a free general council, or a national one; he ſent two envoys, with a requeſt to the King of France, for leave to tranſmit it to the courts of parliament. In the mean time, as the troops of the leagues were in motion, and a conflict of them ſeemed to be inevitable; the thoughts of a treaty of peace appeared, from neceſſity, to be ſuſpended †. Orders were iſſued to fortify St Denis, and ſtrengthen the ramparts of Paris. Henry himſelf went to viſit them, and to appoint the ſtations of the guards, and watches. The com-

May.

Various appearance of Henry's reſolution.

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 1. p. 79. Ibid. p. 120. D'Aubigné, liv. 5. chap. 8.

† Thuan. ibid.

1585.

commiſſions given to ſeveral of the courtiers, and nobles, to raiſe forces, created a general belief, that the King, rouſed, at laſt, by indignation, would take the field, to vindicate the honour of his crown. Encouraged by theſe appearances, ſeveral proteſtant chiefs reſolved, though the King of Navarre ſhould not enter upon action, not to let ſlip this opportunity of attacking their ſworn enemies, in concert with the royaliſts. The watch-word, of *Vive le Roy*, now revived among their troops, appeared to inſpire them with new alacrity and ſpirit for the combat. But all was quickly found to be a ſcene of deluſion; when intelligence came that the Queen-mother, by the King's allowance, was ſetting out to hold a conference, at Eſpernay, with the chiefs of the league. The loyaliſts, of true ſpirit, were abaſhed: The King of Navarre, by his envoys, intreated, and conjured Henry, not to yield to the diſhonourable meaſure of a negociation. Deceiving himſelf, or wiſhing to hide his weakneſs; he aſſured them, as he had done before, that he would do nothing againſt his honour, or the edicts of peace, and that he would hearken to no terms with the confederates, unleſs they firſt laid down their arms.

Alacrity of the proteſtants to ſupport him againſt the league;

When Catherine was appointed negotiator, for the King, with the chiefs of the league; it was underſtood, in what manner the grand conteſt with them was likely to be terminated. Beſides being ſuſpected of having a biaſs to that party, on account of the intereſt of her daughter, the Dutcheſs of Lorain; her own political genius, always, led her to keep up a balance among the parties of the ſtate. For ſome time paſt, ſhe had deſired to ſubvert the influence of Henry's favourites, as prejudicial to her own, with him. This, ſhe knew, would be effectually accompliſhed, by concluding an agreement with the Duke of Guiſe; the declared enemy of the rule of the minions *. D'Avila relates, how her artificial talents were exerted

by Queen Catherine's negociation;

* Ibid.

Book II. 1585.

erted on this occaſion; and what crafty propoſitions were made by her, to gain time, and to detatch the Cardinal of Bourbon from his connection with the league. But this may be reckoned only the flouriſh of Catherine's abilities, ordinary with that hiſtorian; ſince, inſtead of being able to effectuate any of theſe points, ſhe could hardly obtain a truce, from the Duke of Guiſe, for a few days. No interruption being allowed, by him, of the advancement of his troops from the borders; it ſeemed rather, that the negociations were ſo managed, that the hard argument of neceſſity might be urged, more ſtrongly, upon the King. Too much diſpoſed of himſelf to anticipate its force; he conſented to ſign, with the confederates, the ignominious treaty of Nemours.

The ſhameful treaty of Nemours is made.

June 9.

The preliminary form of this agreement was curious *. It was called, *A requeſt to the King; or, the laſt reſolution of the Confederates; in order to demonſtrate, clearly, that they have no other deſign, but the advancement of the glory of God, and the extirpation of hereſies; and that any attempt, againſt the ſtate, is falſely imputed to them.* The conceſſions made by it were; an edict of re-union irrevocable, in favour of the catholic faith; the ſuppreſſion of the exerciſe of every other religion; a declaration of war with the hugonots, for the recovery of their ſurety-towns; and their ſubjection to confiſcations, or to expulſion from the kingdom; without conformity to the catholic church. Above twelve cities and caſtles were conſigned by way of ſecurity to the chiefs of the confederacy. Penſions were granted to ſome of them, for maintaining guards for their perſons; and a general indemnity, for their paſt enterpriſe.

Conceſſions by it to the league.

Such was the import of the treaty of Nemours; juſtly termed the diſgrace of the King, and the triumph of the league. The only point,

* Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 167. Matthieu, p. 500.

point, wanting to complete this view of it, was; that nothing was ſtipulated with regard to the Cardinal's claim to the ſucceſſion. In all other reſpects it was evident, that the Duke of Guiſe had accompliſhed the utmoſt he could propoſe to himſelf, in the beginning of his enterpriſe. When hardly prepared for it, and with only a tumultuary force, he had not only ſtruck terror into the court, but forced the King to adopt the general ſyſtem of his party; it was apparent to all the conſiderate, that the league would be rendered, under ſuch a conductor, an engine of power, ſufficient to ſubvert the foundations of the ſtate. The King of Navarre, ſays Matthieu *, expreſſed the impreſſion, which the account of the treaty of Nemours made upon him, by declaring, "That he found part of the muſtachios of his face, ſuddenly, changed into white, while he leaned his head upon his hand, in a penſive poſture."

* Matthieu, p. 501.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Treaty of Nemours executed by Henry.—Procedure of the King of Navarre.—Elevation of Sixtus Quintus to the Papal Chair.—Five Armies ſent againſt the Proteſtants.—Prince of Condé defeated.—Affairs in the Southern Provinces.—Campaign in Poictou.—Negociation at St Brix.

Book II.

1585. July.

HENRY having, contrary to his honour, to the intereſt of his crown, and even to his public declarations, concluded the treaty of Nemours, with his catholic ſubjects in arms; found his private ſenſation of the indignity of this tranſaction increaſed, the more he reflected upon it. He perceived the compulſion he was under; and, that he could not now, as in former caſes of pacification with the hugonots, take the liberty of evading the execution of his agreement. The appearance of heſitation, or delay, with reſpect to it, would have diſguſted ſome of his moſt intimate counſellors *; and the ſolemn ſanction, given to the article about the edict of union, was ſuch, as could not be, eaſily, diſpenſed with. Sworn to by his Majeſty, and all the Princes, peers, and officers of the crown; it was to be immediately executed, with the forces already on foot, and other levies that could be preſently made. Tho' ſenſible, that the fame of this holy war, with the hugonots, would redound to the credit of his adverſaries; Henry was too much involved to draw back from it. For the more formal promulgation of his edict; he went, with all his attendants of ſtate, to the court of parliament; where the counſellors were aſſembled in their red robes. The Pariſian populace poured forth their acclamations of joy, upon the occaſion; while, in the aſſembly itſelf, the general ſilence,

July 16. Publication of the treaty of Nemours.

* Thuan. lib. 81. Mem de la ligue, p. 168.

ſilence, and the concern viſible in the countenances of many, ſhowed how differently they were affected. It was, indeed, rather a gloomy ſpectacle to the conſiderate; to behold a Prince, of Henry's years, and mature judgment, conſtrained, in ſuch a manner, to alter an eſſential part of the plan of his adminiſtration, and to authoriſe a decree, for arming one part of his ſubjects againſt another, and for increaſing the flames of a civil war; which had ſo long waſted the vitals of the kingdom.

To the moderate, the peaceable, and the humane; the conſequences ariſing from the abolition of all former edicts of toleration *, and the execution of the preſent violent one, appeared deplorable. By it, the proteſtant party were not only prohibited all exerciſe of their religion, but required, under penalty of bodily puniſhment, and the confiſcation of their goods, to make public profeſſion of the catholic faith; or to depart the kingdom, within ſix months. What efforts of reſiſtence would be made by the warlike, and the brave, among them, might be certainly foreſeen; and the diſtreſs and confuſion into which the unarmed, the defenceleſs, or the timid, would be thrown, were equally apparent. Deprived of their own chambers of juſtice; the ſingle article of clemency extended to them could hardly be ſuppoſed to produce its effect; ſince, though allowed, in caſe of their going into exile, to ſell or diſpoſe of their eſtates, nothing, but injury and depredation, could be expected from other prejudiſed judges, and partial tribunals.

While, with a reluctance that could not be concealed, Henry acted this diſhonourable part; the King of Navarre appeared to derive a higher meaſure of reputation from the dangerous aſſaults prepared for him. In reſolving to combat them, in the refuge of his

* Ibid.

Book II.

1585.

innocence, as his public declarations expreſſed it; he undertook, not merely his own defence, but what Henry, with all the power of his crown, had declined, the vindication of the inſulted royalty. Warranted in this procedure, by the King's late condemnation of the confederacy as rebellious, and from the aſſurances given him, in Henry's private letters, that the edicts of peace ſhould be maintained; he had reaſon to conclude the treaty of Nemours to be a violence impoſed upon his Majeſty *; which enabled his enemies to arm themſelves with his authority, and to proſcribe, together with a number of his ſubjects, thoſe who were neareſt to him in blood. "In ſuch a cauſe, ſaid this courageous prince in his manifeſto, I am not afraid that I ſhall be deſtitute of friends: For it is well known, that his Majeſty's heart is with us; though his enemies and ours have dared to uſurp his arms." He offered, in the way of reaſon and equity, to remove every ground of quarrel alledged againſt him; or to avoid the impending bloodſhed of France, by meeting the Duke of Guiſe, or others of his chief adherents, in the liſts of private combat. Having, by a new proteſtation, declared himſelf united with his couſin the Prince of Condé, and the Marſhal Montmorency; he called upon all loyal ſubjects to join with them, in waging inceſſant war with the faction, that tyrannized over the King and ſtate, and ſubverted the fundamental laws of the monarchy.

Reſolution of the King of Navarre upon it.

Conſcious, as Henry was, that his honour might appear blemiſhed to the King of Navarre; he now ſent three of his miniſters, the Cardinal de Lenoncourt †, the Secretary de Poigni, and the Preſident de Brulart, as envoys to him. By their reaſoning with him, he hoped to palliate, if he could not juſtify, his diſgraceful treaty with the league. Together with the argument of neceſſity, from the ſtate of his-

August 25.

* Mem. de la ligue, p. 176. 187. 195.

† Ibid. p. 211.

1585. Envoys ſent to him by Henry.

his Majeſty's affairs, they urged that ſoothing pretext to the King of Navarre, that the plan of the re-union adopted by him, was the only one, which could prevent the moſt general combination of the catholics againſt his eventual ſucceſſion to the crown; and that, in this meaſure, the King had conſulted his perſonal intereſt, as no leſs dear to him, than that of his ſon, and legitimate heir of the monarchy. In the reply made to the envoys, it was ſaid by Henry; "Since his Majeſty does me the honour to acknowledge that I ſo nearly belong to him; how much could I have wiſhed it had pleaſed him, to have required ſuch a proof of my allegiance, and fidelity to him, as was ſuited to the dignity of that relation." But when, in confirmation of his edict of union, the converſion of the King of Navarre, and the ſuſpenſion of the public exerciſe of the proteſtant religion, for ſix months, and the ſurrender of the ſurety-towns, were propoſed; this conference for peace concluded; with only a vague agreement for renewing it, by an interview between that Prince, and the Queen-mother; which took not place, till the following year.

Conſoling himſelf, under the ſhame of the late treaty, with the hopes, that at leaſt one faction in his kingdom, though not the moſt formidable, would be ſuppreſſed; Henry prepared for executing his edict againſt the proteſtants. So long, however, the votary of peace, and, almoſt, the victim of habitual indolence, and pleaſure; he could not help diſcovering that this taſk, impoſed on him, was moſt diſagreeable to his temper. Upon the occaſion of his demanding the ſupplies, neceſſary for the war *; perceiving the delegates of Paris, he had ſent for, inclined to make ſome objections, he addreſſed himſelf to each of them, in the following peremptory ſtrain: "You, of the parliament, ſaid he, muſt lay your account with the ſtoppage of

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 502.

Book II. 1585. your ſalaries, during this war." "As to you, my citizens of Paris, you muſt have your funds for it in readineſs; otherwiſe, when your corn-mills are on fire, as I have ſeen them, it will be too late." When they began to offer their remonſtrance, his looks changed more into paſſion. "Is this a time, ſaid he, to bring forth your difficulties? Why did you not believe the account I gave you, already, of the conſequences? By what I now ſee, we ſhall bring the maſs itſelf into danger; while we dream of deſtroying the *preaching* of the Hugonots." Juſtified in ſuch expreſſions of indignation, as Henry well might be; he forgot that a Prince, when he ſuffers compulſion, ought never to ſhow himſelf to be conſtrained; and, at the ſame time, he afforded his enemies ſome ground for accuſing him of want of zeal, in the catholic cauſe.

All circumſtances ſeemed, now, to conſpire to augment the perſecution raiſed againſt the King of Navarre, and the proteſtants. The approbation of the league, by the court of Rome, hitherto in vain ſollicited by its agents, was, in a great meaſure, obtained; after the elevation of the famous Sixtus Quintus to the pontifical chair. His true character, and genius, concealed during the obſcure condition of his life, and even through the gradations of his higher fortune, were immediately diſcloſed to view, upon his attainment of the purple *. Eſteemed peaceable, moderate in his views, unmoved by worldly paſſions, indifferent, even to injuries; he ſhowed himſelf, at the age of ſixty-five, to be vehement in his temper, implacable in his reſentments, and obſtinate in his purpoſes; to a degree beyond moſt men. His ſtrength of mind, and his penetration, were warped with the keeneſt paſſions; and exerted themſelves, chiefly, in the train of the latter. As ſupreme head of the church, and as Sovereign of Rome; his decrees and acts were, alike, the arbi-

May 1.

Sixtus Quintus raiſed to the chair.

* Thuan. Genevae edit. lib. 100. tom. 5. p. 119.

1585.

His character.

arbitrary dictates of his will. Diſregarding preſent eſteem or approbation; he ſeemed to be covetous only of future fame; and to truſt, that the exertions of his uncommon genius would acquire it. Parcimonious, in the œconomy of his palace and table; his domeſtic expence ſcarcely equalled that of opulence in a private ſtation. But, by means of the vaſt treaſures he amaſſed, he ſtrove to emulate, in a variety of public works and ſtructures, the moſt ſumptuous ones of the Roman emperors. The terror, and ſcourge of the petty tyrants, and banditti of the eccleſiaſtical ſtate; he would have merited the praiſe of a founder of it; if he had lived in a more uncivilized period. While the firſt nobility of Rome trembled under his ſway; he equally contemned their ſarcaſms upon the meanneſs of his birth, or their cenſures of his actions. In alluſion to his paternal cottage, without a roof; he uſed to ſay; "Our houſe was ſurely a moſt illuſtrious one; ſince, within its walls, as well as without, it received all the illumination which the ſun could give it." Such was the extraordinary genius of Sixtus Quintus; ranked with the foremoſt of his predeceſſors in St Peter's chair. With an admiration of the vigour of his mind; we may ſcan his character, as ages after him are ſaid to have done ſeveral of his public monuments; in which the wonderful efforts made were readily perceived; while the beauty, propriety, or taſte of them, could hardly be diſcerned.

From natural temper and ſagacity, Sixtus Quintus condemned the catholic league in France; and, by ſending ſome monks to the gallies, who calumniated Henry, he ſhowed what he thought the contemners of a ſovereign's name deſerved. He declared, upon hearing the inſult upon his crown, by the treaty of Nemours, that the indignation of a monarch, ſo exaſperated, would be hurtful to the catholic church in that kingdom; and he, juſtly, predicted the political conſequences of the inſolent procedure of the chiefs

of

Book II.
1585.

of the league. But, while he expreſſed theſe ſentiments, and blamed Henry's weakneſs; he thought his own dignity required him, to equal his moſt zealous and rigid predeceſſors, in controuling heretics. The firſt bull granted by him to the Duke of Nevers, excommunicated both the favourers of the hugonots, and ſuch as formed any deſign againſt the King and ſtate. Yet, as this moderation might diminiſh the eclat of his authority, and he would not brandiſh his ſpiritual weapons in a vain manner *, he, preſently, by another bull, pronounced his *anathemas* againſt the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé, as contumacious and relapſed heretics. Signed by five and twenty cardinals, this bull was of ſignal advantage to the league; as it authoriſed the excluſion of the King of Navarre from his heritable right to the crown. It alſo ſerved to intimidate Henry III. from ſupporting, though in an oblique manner, the title of that prince. This appeared in the conteſt that followed, about the publication of the bull in France; in which too much was yielded to the Pope's arrogance, by Henry and his miniſters; though the reception of it, into the records of the kingdom, was diverted.

Papal bull againſt the two Princes of Bourbon. Septem. 19.

The King of Navarre, left almoſt alone to aſſert his own rights, and to vindicate the honour of the French monarchy, againſt the preſumption of Sixtus, acquitted himſelf with his uſual ſpirit †. By means of ſome notable agents ſent to Rome, he got ſeveral copies of a printed bill, or proteſtation, in his name, fixed up in the public places of the city. The ſucceſs of an attempt ſo uncommon, under the auſtere government of Sixtus, as well as the ſpirited arraignment of his bull, afforded ſubject both for ſerious and ironical arguments, againſt the Pope's authority ‡. It was known, that the King of Navarre, by this action, loſt nothing of the high opi-

The King of Navarre's ſpirited proteſtation againſt it. November 6.

* Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 214. † Ibid. p. 243. ‡ Thuan. ibid. p. 47.

opinion which Sixtus himſelf had conceived of him; whoſe intrepid ſpirit he often commended to the French ambaſſador; and wiſhed his maſter had ſuch a ſhare of reſolution as the *Bearnois*. He was afterwards heard to declare, "that, in all the world, he knew only of two princes, who, their hereſy being excepted, were worthy to reign;" and it was well underſtood, that Henry of Navarre, and Elizabeth of England, were the perſons meant by him. Whether with-held by his parſimony, or by congenial ſympathy with the former; he ever refuſed to contribute, out of his affluent treaſury, for ſupporting the league.

It has been obſerved, that the compoſition and ſtile of the King of Navarre's manifeſtos, were remarkable for propriety and ſpirit. In the letters addreſſed by him, at this time, to the three orders of the French ſtate *; we ſee this exemplified in a peculiar manner. Juſt argument, and pathetic ſentiment and expreſſion, are conſpicuous in each of them. Having ſhown, that the preſent deciſion of the court of Rome, which reprobated the title of the acknowledged ſucceſſor, was ſuch an inſult upon the King and ſtate, as ſurpaſſed any former inſtance of Papal arrogance: His addreſs to the nobles, on the ſubject of the enſuing war, is conceived in theſe terms: "The princes of the blood of France are the chief of the nobility. As one of them, and having the honour to be the firſt in rank; I love you all. With this affection, the effuſion of your blood feels, as the draining of my own. An alien can have no ſuch ſympathy with you; nor does he eſtimate the loſs of you to the kingdom. How reluctantly, then, do I engage in this new ſcene of domeſtic war!" To the third order; he expreſſed himſelf in the following manner: "Compelled, in a great meaſure, I know you are, to endure the preſent commotions of the ſtate; by which you are ever expoſed to be the greateſt ſufferers.

Affected

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 1. p. 305. Matthieu, ibid. p. 504.

Book II. 1585.

Affected with your miſeries, I deſire not to increaſe them, by calling you to take arms in my behalf. All I requeſt of you, is to have your good wiſhes and your prayers." He concluded his addreſs to the clergy, who chiefly urged the war againſt him, with this juſt reprimand of their violent zeal: "If war be ſo much to your taſte; if a battle pleaſes you more than a theological diſpute, and a combination to ſhed blood, more than a council; I muſt waſh my hands clear of the ſtain of all that is ſpilt; and ſay, let the inſtigators of our diſcord, and the authors of our miſery, bear, on their heads, the load of the guilt."

Remonſtrance of the parliament againſt the King's edict.

As analogous, in argument and ſtyle, to theſe ſpecimens of the genius of du Pleſſis Mornay, in compoſition; the remonſtrance of the court of parliament, upon the ſubject of the edict of union, deſerves to be mentioned *. It is a noble record of the force of the ſentiments of humanity, and of reaſon, when civil outrage was authorized, both by the head of the church, and of the ſtate. It expreſſed their abhorrence of the violation of juſtice and equity, eſſential to all government, in a manner that entitled them to the name of the guardians of the laws of the ſtate. "Although, ſaid they, the whole Hugonot party was reduced to a ſingle man; no member of our body could preſume to paſs ſentence of death upon that individual; unleſs his proceſs were legally formed, and ſufficient proof brought to arraign, and to convict him in the commiſſion of a capital crime; and, even in condemning the malefactor, we would regret the loſs of a citizen. How, then, can any amongſt us dare, without form or rule of juſtice, to promulgate, under the falſe name of an edict, an arbitrary and bloody decree, for ſpreading, through cities and provinces, ſlaughter and devaſtation; and adding

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 1. p. 222.

adding to the horror of the many public graves and ruins of the kingdom?" Book II. 1585.

In the midſt of his ſecret diſſatisfaction and anxiety; Henry adopted the aſſurances that were given him, by the inſtigators of the war, with reſpect to the ſucceſsful and ſpeedy iſſue of it *. From this perſuaſion, which was agreeable to him; he ſhowed unuſual activity in making preparations to execute his edict. He reduced the term of ſix months, which it allowed the Hugonots for abjuring their religion, to the ſhorter one of three; and, ſoon after, to fifteen days. He appeared himſelf in the court of parliament, and required the regiſtration of ſeveral edicts, for raiſing ſupplies. In a ſhort time, five armies, under different commanders, were ſet on foot; and the whole kingdom, that ſo much abounded with ſoldiers, and chieftains, was called upon, to exert no leſs a degree of its military power, than if the moſt imminent danger had threatened the ſtate; or ſome mighty enterpriſe had been undertaken by it, againſt a dreaded and powerful foreign enemy. When the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé, followed by the reſolute part of the Hugonots, and the Marſhal Montmorency, half an ally to them, were conſidered as the only opponents of this formidable armament of the kingdom; it appeared that the former, without a miracle in their favour, could make little or no reſiſtence. It was preſumed, with reaſon, that, upon the march of the royal armies, moſt of the towns held by the proteſtants would ſurrender, from fear; and that the reſt, unprepared for ſieges, would be reduced within a few days.

Five armies are ſet on foot againſt the proteſtants.

The diſagreement of the proteſtant chiefs, at this dangerous juncture †, mentioned in Sully's Memoirs, is related by none of the other

U

* Matthieu, p. 505. † Liv. 2.

Book II.

1585.

other hiſtorians here cited. As the reſolutions taken in their aſſemblies, for common defence, were not interrupted by it; we may preſume, that any appearance of it among them, reſpected the acknowledgement of the King of Navarre, as the head of their party. Upon this point, it is neceſſary to be obſerved, that their adherence to this prince was weakened, by his becoming preſumptive heir of the crown. A natural ſuſpicion aroſe, that, without regard to their common cauſe of religion, or their political intereſt, he might be diſpoſed to proſecute the tempting object of his title to the ſucceſſion; and it was apprehended that one, who had ſo grand a point of intereſt to manage with the court, would not acquit himſelf altogether, as became the protector of their body. This circumſtance hindered their acting with that concert, in their military operations; which was neceſſary to the ſucceſs of them. But their appearance, under the ſtandards of their chiefs, was not diminiſhed by it *. Though the love of peace, now longer enjoyed by them, than on any former occaſion, made ſome of them conform to the maſs, and others take flight into Germany and England; the generality of their party ſhowed their reſolution to combat the violent perſecution raiſed againſt them, and to endure, with matchleſs conſtancy, that ſtorm of war, which ſeemed more than ſufficient to overwhelm them †. To teach the catholics ſome fellow-feeling with them in their ſufferings, by the execution of the royal edict; the

Novem. 30. King of Navarre publiſhed a declaration, ſimilar to it, for confiſcating the eſtates of the catholic nobility and gentry, in all the cities and provinces where it was enforced.

The war opened in Poictou.

The firſt conſiderable rencounter, betwixt the adverſe parties, in the field, was occaſioned by the attempt of the Duke de Mercoeur, the governor, and almoſt the ſovereign of Brittany, to throw himſelf

* Thuan. lib. 82. † Mem. de la ligue, p. 271.

ſelf into Poictou, with a view to confirm ſome wavering towns in the intereſt of the league, and to diſſipate ſuch bodies of the proteſtants as were drawing together, from ſeveral quarters of that province *. He hoped to perform this atchievement, with the more facility; as the Prince of Condé, the only opponent to be feared in that diſtrict, had yet collected but a ſmall number of troops. But the event proved, that he truſted more to the weakneſs of the enemy, than to the bravery of what he called his *provincial army*. He allowed himſelf to be inſulted, under the walls of Fontenay, by inferior forces; and, as if terrified by the bold face of his adverſary, he ſuddenly broke up his camp, and left great part of his baggage, which was rich, to be taken, and the rout of his fugitive troops to be purſued, with ſome ſlaughter, by the Prince and his followers. Upon this unexpected ſucceſs, Tillebourg, on the river Charante, ſurrendered to the proteſtants; whoſe forces began to be conſiderably augmented in Poictou and Xaintonge, by the acceſſion of la Tremoüille, Duke of Thoars, to their party; by means of the Prince of Condé's marriage with his ſiſter. Aſſiſted by the Rochellers, with ſome money and troops; the prince reſolved to attempt the ſiege of Brouage; a place of importance, from its ſituation, in the neighbourhood of Rochelle, and from its revenues of ſalt, and furniſhed with a regular garriſon, under the command of the brave St Luc †. The blocade of it was formed; and ſeveral briſk aſſaults that were given, ſhowed both the valour and diſcipline of the Prince's troops; when intelligence was received by him, that the caſtle of Angers, then reckoned the ſtrongeſt citadel in France, had been ſurpriſed by Rochemorte, a Hugonot captain. It was an incident, peculiar to that period of confuſion, when many of the catholic officers were uncertain, whether the King meant to fulfil his treaty with the league, or to counteract it. Upon a perſuaſion, that he pur-

* D'Aubigné, liv. 5. chap. 10.

† Ibid. chap. 11.

Book II. 1585.

purpoſed the latter; two or three captains had conſpired with Rochemorte to make themſelves maſters of the caſtle; and he, now, was the only ſurvivor of them, at the head of five proteſtant, and ſeven catholic ſoldiers, to retain his poſſeſſion of it againſt the citizens of Angers. In this critical ſituation of Rochemorte, it was, at firſt, determined in the council of war, that a detachment of troops, under d'Aubigné, the author of the *general hiſtory*, ſhould be ſent to attempt the paſſage of the Loire, and to endeavour to reinforce the citadel. But the prudent reſolution was ſoon changed into the hazardous one, of marching the bulk of the ſmall army, conducted by Condé himſelf, to preſerve the important acquiſition. The imagined fame of the exploit, an argument often dangerous to be liſtened to, in martial affairs, overcame all objections, ariſing from the great diſtance of Angers, from the obſtructions of the numerous catholic garriſons upon the Loire, and from the chance there was of their arriving too late to ſave the caſtle.

The Prince of Condé marches to ſecure the caſtle of Angers.

Moſt of the hiſtorians have given a detail of this ill-projected expedition to Angers; as a ſtriking picture of misfortune, conſequent to temerity *. Rochemorte being killed with a ſhot; and the citadel having ſurrendered to the catholics, the whole country, around Angers, was filled with their hoſtile ſquadrons; upon the Prince of Condé's approach. Invironed by the enemy, and entangled with rivers; he ſaw his retreat out off, and no hopes of ſafety for his little army left, but by ſeparating it into the ſmalleſt parties. Never was there a more total diſperſion of a regular body of troops; without an action, or almoſt any ſkirmiſh with the enemy. It was a more diſmal and grievous ſcene, than what the eve of the moſt deſperate engagement, in the field, could preſent; when the ſoldiers took the laſt farewell of their captains; and friends and companions mutually

His unfortunate expedition and retreat.

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 13. D'Aubigné, chap. 14.

mutually embraced; with no proſpect of meeting each other again. The perils and accidents they encountered, bore a reſemblance to thoſe, which Sully * deſcribes as undergone by him, at this time; when, with a few attendants, he ſet out from Roſny, in diſguiſe, and ſought his perilous way, through the towns and garriſons of the catholics, to the King of Navarre, in Guienne. The general eſcape, not of the chiefs and officers only, but of the common ſoldiers, amounting to more than two thouſand men, was amazing and marvellous, in the midſt of their dangers. Scarce any of them were killed, or taken †. The Prince of Condé, ſo blameable for his precipitation, ſhowed the utmoſt compoſure, and conſtancy, in ſuſtaining a courſe of hazards, and toils; more tedious than that of any of the parties. After many wanderings, he eſcaped to the ſea-coaſt of Normandy; whence he embarked for England. He was received by Queen Elizabeth, with courteſy and honour; and ſoon furniſhed with a naval eſcorte, for his return to Rochelle.

This diſaſter of the proteſtant troops, under the Prince of Condé, though attended with the loſs of few lives, proved a hard, and irreparable one, for ſome time, to that party. The diſſipated bands were the flower of their gentry, in Poictou, and Xaintonge; who, from indignation againſt the league, had put themſelves in their beſt military array ‡, and carried the greateſt part of their fortunes into the field with them; that they might avoid the threatened confiſcations. They were formed into ſtanding companies, and regiments; which, bearing the names of their chiefs, came, in the courſe of the civil war, to be as well known, by thoſe of St Gelais, of Clermont, of Charbonnieres, of de Lorges, St Laurin, and other ſuch appellatives; as were the regular corps of the royal army. Many of theſe new Captains were, afterwards, much diſtinguiſhed by their valour, and

* Mem. liv. 2. † Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 37. et 42. ‡ D'Aubigné, chap. 12.

Book II. 1585. and hardy exploits; and, though not ſo often mentioned as the principal commanders, were the men of conſtant action in the field, and partakers of all the fatigues and dangers; which were the lot of their party. So remarkably *militant*, beyond former occaſions, had oppoſition to the league, and to the execution of the King's ſevere edict, ſuddenly rendered all the valiant among them. By their preſent diſcomfiture, moſt of them having loſt their horſes, and equipages; a conſiderable triumph was afforded to their adverſaries. The early check was felt by the King of Navarre, and his partizans in Guienne; who found the occaſion it gave them, to condemn the Prince of Condé, for not acting in more correſpondence with them, too ſerious to be much inſiſted upon; when the general danger required the greateſt unanimity.

In the midſt of the terror with which the proteſtants were ſtruck by this diſaſter; ſeveral armies, already on foot, marched, as at a ſignal, towards the weſtern, and ſouthern provinces of France. That of the Duke of Mayenne, as the moſt conſiderable, directed its rout
December. to Poictou, and Xaintonge; in which laſt province, the Marſhal Matignon was ready to join him; and de Biron, alſo, had a body of troops in theſe confines. The Duke of Joyeuſe's father aſſembled the royal forces of Languedoc; and a large army was prepared, under the Duke of Eſpernon, to penetrate into Provence.

In none of the former invaſions of the ſouth diſtricts of France, where the chief ſtrength of the proteſtants lay; was their inability to make reſiſtence ſo apparent, as in the preſent conjuncture *. When the Duke of Mayenne, with an army of ten thouſand men, arrived at Luſignan, in Poictou; there appeared, no where, in the field, a body of troops to oppoſe him; and the garriſon-towns ſeemed

* Matthieu, p. 510. Mem. de la ligue, p. 159.

1585.

Weakneſs of the proteſtants in the war.

ſeemed equally defenceleſs. By a peſtilential diſtemper, which began in the cities, and ſpread into the villages, numbers of the labouring people had been ſwept off; and the corn harveſt, in many places, remaining unreaped, famine, or a high degree of ſcarcity, prevailed in Poictou, and Xaintonge. The garriſons were generally weakened, and ſickly, from the contagion. St Jean d'Angeli, which formerly had always preſented ſome beacon of terror to an approaching foe, ſhowed only the ſignal of its deſolation. All its inhabitants had quitted their houſes; and ſheltered themſelves, as they could, from the cold of the ſeaſon, in huts, or tents, raiſed on the counterſcarp, without the walls of the town. Within it *, one ſoldier only was poſted to watch, in the higheſt ſteeple. Upon the Duke of Mayenne's advancing towards it; the Count de Laval, eldeſt ſon of de Andelot Chatillon, ſo famous in the firſt civil wars, drew together a few bands of ſoldiers; and, by offering to ſkirmiſh with parties of the enemy, endeavoured to conceal the weak condition of the garriſon. His ſtratagems produced the deſired effect. The Duke, unwilling to encamp his army, ſo near the peſtilence, and preſuming that a place already waſted by it, would ſoon be reduced to the laſt extremity, by famine, contented himſelf with poſting ſome troops in its neighbourhood; to cut off all ſupplies from it, either of proviſions, or of men. He now advanced with his army towards Guienne; and, in his march, aſſaulted, and took Montignac, Beaulieu, and Gignac; places ſo inconſiderable, that the military honour was juſtly ſaid to belong, rather, to the defenders of them; and the beginning of his campaign, with ſo large an army, to be afronted by the report of ſuch mean atchievements.

Proweſs of the Duke of Mayenne in Poictou.

Before marking the end of this year, the order of events requires a tranſition, in the narrative, to what paſſed in the more remote provinces

* D'Aubigné, tom. 3. liv. 1. chap. 1.

Book II.

1585.

Military affairs in the ſouthern provinces.

provinces of Dauphiny, Provence, and Languedoc. In the firſt of them, the brave Leſdiguieres had begun to exert his military proweſs, in behalf of the perſecuted party. Signally alert, and ſkilful in the ſurpriſe of places; he had, by the new invention of the *Petard*, forced his way into Monteſimard*, and alſo poſſeſſed himſelf of the city of Ambrun. In the aſſault of the latter, the woeful waſte of war was beheld, in the ruin of its noble and beautiful cathedral. When the citadel was taken, the catholics had made it a place of arms, and being ſoon ſet on fire by the ſhot of the enemy, its treaſury of rich and valuable curioſities, together with its ſacred utenſils, was conſumed in the flames, or became the prey of the victors. Knowing how to ſtrengthen himſelf, by every advantage he gained, in a country barricaded with its mountains; this able commander ſoon put himſelf in a condition to maintain his ground againſt la Vallette, the King's lieutenant in the province, and to obſtruct the advancement of ſuch ſuccours, as might be ſent to him. He, in a ſhort time, began to act beyond the borders of Dauphiny; and, when, by the tragical death of Henry Duke of Angoûleme, natural brother to the King, and called the Grand Prior, Provence, his government, was thrown into confuſion; Leſdiguieres led forth a part of his troops to the aſſiſtance of his friends, in that country; and gave a conſiderable defeat to the Baron de Vins.

Among the many moral leſſons which hiſtory affords, the fatal exit of the Grand Prior of France deſerves to be recorded for its ſingularity. His character, as a man, and his conduct as governor of Provence, appeared to conſpire with his dignity, to place him beyond the reach of ſo uncommon a fate†. Civilized, and humane in his manners, and temper; prudent, and equitable in his adminiſtration of public affairs; he was no leſs acceptable to the people, than

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 521. † Ibid. p. 321. Thuan. lib. 85.

1585.

than eſteemed by the King, and the court. An Italian, called Altoviti, in the rank of a ſea-captain of Marſeilles, had married Chateauneuf, the famous beauty, and once the beloved miſtreſs of Henry III. His natural preſumption had grown with this piece of fortune. He gave informations to the court, of what paſſed in the province; and, from ſome reſentment of the Grand Prior's diſregard of his imaginary merit, and not from any known injury or afront that was done him, he, at length, ventured to inſert, in his letters, ſome impeachment of the governor's loyalty. Informed of his treacherous crime; the Duke, inſtead of bringing him to a trial, ſo far moderated his indignation, as only to reproach him with his baſeneſs, and to require him to keep at a diſtance, from Aix, and out of his way. A ſhort time after, the Italian, whether from inſenſibility, or from contempt, returned to the capital of the province. The Duke of Angoûleme, accidentally paſſing the ſtreet, with ſome attendants, obſerved him, as he ſtood at a window of his lodgings. At the ſight of the offender, thus appearing to ſcorn his order, the ſenſe of his provocation awaked with violence. He entered the houſe, in a tranſport of paſſion; and, while Altoviti implored mercy, he plunged his ſword into his body. The falling victim of his wrath retained ſo much ſtrength, as to ſtrike his dagger into the lower part of his belly. The vengeful wound was ſuch, as put an end to the Grand Prior's life, the next day. Thus, one moment's rage, though ariſing from high provocation, which made the ſon of Henry II. forget the dignity of his rank and character, expoſed him to fall, in the moſt extraordinary manner, by the hand of a deſpicable, and dying adverſary.

Fatal exit of the Duke of Angoulême.

In Languedoc, the Marſhal Montmorency had power and policy, ſufficient to prevent any conſiderable hoſtilities among the parties. Acting in the character of chief of the political catholics, or royaliſts, he repreſſed the inſurrections of the league; and, about this

BOOK II. 1585.

time, defeated ſome bodies of its partizans, who took the field. But his engagements with the King of Navarre, or the proteſtants, were not ſo particular *, as to carry him beyond the line of his former conduct. He protected the Hugonots that lived peaceably; and left the Marſhal Joyeuſe, and his ſon the Duke, to contend with the reſt of them upon the extremities of his province; within which he ſuffered none of the parties to wage war, or, at leaſt, to gain ſuch advantages, as might diminiſh his controuling power, and authority. By this procedure, ſo different from that of all the other chiefs, he acquired the reputation of an accompliſhed politician, as well as of a prudent commander. In the midſt of the combuſtion of the kingdom, it was ſurpriſing to behold one of its largeſt provinces, generally kept in ſubjection to him, and in a ſtate of peace; while his alliance was courted by the different parties, and, as a modern catholic hiſtorian † aſſerts, his pacific conduct was approved by the court of Rome.

Conduct of the Marſhal Montmorency.

January 8.

In the commencement of the year, the Prince of Condé being arrived, from England, at Rochelle; the ſight of him, and the appearance of many of the other chiefs of his diſſipated army, who, after an eſcape, accounted providential, found their way to that city, animated the Rochellers to take part in the war ‡. Ammunition, and ſtores of every kind, were furniſhed by them, to the neighbouring forts. Several regiments were recruited; and efforts were made, to open the communication with St Jean d' Angeli, and other places, which ſtill held out againſt the catholic forces. By the Prince of Condé's activity, a line of forts, that incommoded the acceſs to Rochelle, was ſwept off; and meaſures were taken to reduce other garriſons of the enemy, in that quarter §. In the mean time, the King of

The recovery of the proteſtants from their diſmay.

* D'Aubigné, tom. 2. liv. 5. chap. 17. † P. D. tom. 9. p. 214. ‡ Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 167. § Ibid. p. 176.

of Navarre, by remaining on the defenſive, and managing his weak powers, had the ſatisfaction to ſee the two armies of the Duke of Mayenne, and the Marſhal Matignon, in the middle of winter, traverſing a waſted province, and conſuming their ſtrength, in the ſiege of deſpicable towns. At convenient opportunities only, he put his troops in motion; and, about this time, obliged the latter of theſe generals to quit the ſiege of Caſtels *. Diſſatisfied with his little ſucceſs, and averſe to enterpriſes of difficulty, that might hazard his reputation, the Duke was expoſed to ſome real hardſhips, inevitable in ſuch a campaign; and complained of many more. Againſt the court he murmured, for want of pay to his troops; and againſt Matignon, for not ſupplying him with proviſions, which could not be procured. But he thought of ſignalizing his expedition, and of cutting ſhort the diſagreeable campaign, by one blow now meditated by him. This was the ſcheme of ſhutting up the King of Navarre in Bearn, or of intercepting him in his retreat, into Xaintonge, or Poictou; which appeared to be the only refuge left to him, when incapable of acting in the field. To the accompliſhment of the latter purpoſe, nothing more ſeemed to be required, than to occupy two or three paſſes, upon the Garronne, with his troops; through which, properly poſted, that Prince could not be ſuppoſed to attempt his tranſition, to the ſouth of that great river, without being taken priſoner.

1586.

February.

Duke of Mayenne tired of his campaign;

March.

In Sully's memoirs, the extremity, to which the King of Navarre was reduced †, at this juncture, is repreſented as ſuch, that councils were held about the ſafety of his perſon, and advices given for his retiring into Languedoc, or withdrawing into England; until the ſuccours of Germany ſhould arrive. But, when his ſituation is conſidered, it appears to have been hazardous; without requiring any ſuch

 deſpe-

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 510.

† Ibid. liv. 2.

Book II.

1586.

deſperate courſe. He, indeed, could not act, nor remain longer, with ſafety, in Guienne. Yet Xaintonge now offered a better retreat to him, than for ſome time after the Prince of Condé's defeat; and D'Aubigné* affirms, that, upon raiſing the ſiege of Caſtels, before the armies of the Duke and the Marſhal joined to ſpread themſelves along the Garronne, he might have paſſed over it into that province, with much leſs peril than he preſently underwent. Unwilling to appear compelled, and chuſing to retire ſlowly, like the lion, when he is beſet in the field; he ſaid, gaily, "The Duke of Mayenne, ſurely, is not ſo perverſe a boy, but he will allow me to walk a little longer in Guienne." As if at full freedom, he paid a viſit to Bearn; where he was quickly informed, that every diſpoſition was made by the Duke, for preventing his paſſage of the river†. He ſeemed deſirous, not only to baffle, but to afront this commander remarkably, by paſſing it, almoſt in his view. Without his equal, in ſuch enterpriſes, he, with twenty gentlemen, and ten of his guards, reached Caumont, on the river, when the Duke was advanced within two or three leagues of it. He even halted there till the evening; and then, under the cloud of night, traced his way, through the poſts and quarters of the enemy, on the look out for him, till he arrived at St Foy; the place he had named for the rendezvous of the reſt of his troop; which, altogether, conſiſted of three hundred horſemen.

turns his efforts to the intercepting the King of Navarre at the Garronne;

but without ſucceſs.

Senſibly mortified, by having failed of his aim; the Duke of Mayenne found the hardſhips under which he had repined, during the winter, aggravated in the ſpring. An infectious diſtemper appeared among his troops‡; and a diſguſt of a campaign, in which they gained neither honour nor profit, ſeized both the officers and ſoldiers. In vain did he ſtill ſtrive to acquire ſome reputation in the

April.

* Tom. 3. liv. 4. chap. 5. † Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 177. ‡ Ibid. tom. 1. p. 472.

the field, by undertaking more ſieges; and accompliſhing, with much labour, the reduction of Caſtels, St Bazeile, Montſegur, and Caſtillon. Theſe were trophies like the former, that could not exalt his military name, or be reckoned the ſuitable operations of an army of fourteen thouſand men, commanded by him in a province, where no body of three thouſand was ever ſeen to oppoſe him *. The whole ſummer being ſpent in the ſieges of theſe places; a calculation was made of the expence of his army, ſtated at a hundred and ſixty thouſand crowns a month, and of the value of his conqueſts; which threw a ridicule upon them. The Hugonots were ſaid to be other ſort of ſtewards than the King's generals; when, for paying four franks for a ladder, they retook Caſtillon by ſurpriſe; which had coſt ſome hundred thouſand crowns. Reduced by ſickneſs and deſertion, the Duke's army broke up in September. He apologized for his campaign, by a printed narrative of it; which reflected, indirectly on the King, as well as on his miniſters; and the partizans of the league, with pleaſure, aſcribed all his want of the expected ſucceſs to Henry's ſiniſter management.

May. June. July. September.

In the province of Xaintonge, and its borders, the war, waged by the proteſtant chiefs, became remarkably vigorous. Though their collected troops formed no army ſufficient to encounter the Marſhal Biron, the weakeſt of the catholic generals; yet every effort was made by them to defeat his deſigns, to ſuccour the places threatened, or aſſaulted by him, and to reduce thoſe, which hindered the free commerce of Rochelle, or might intercept the parties of their friends that came to join them from Poictou. Their moſt warlic captains, and the flower of their nobility and gentry, with their troops, being collected into one corner; a conſtant ſcene of ſkirmiſhes

The war vigorouſly maintained by the proteſtants at Rochelle.

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 9. Matthieu, ibid.

Book II.
1586.

ſhes in the field, or of aſſaults, ſieges, and defences of towns and forts, was carried on with unuſual ardor. The emulation of the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé, now altogether martial, inſpirited their officers to vie with one another, in enduring fatigues, and braving all dangers *. It was then, that ſeveral enterpriſes, ſome of them of the moſt laborious kind, were ſucceſsfully conducted by them. Broüage, though defended by St Luc, was deprived of the commodity of its harbour, by ſeveral ſhips being ſunk in the entrance to it. Marans, an iſland in the ſea marſhes, made ſuch a defence, againſt all the induſtry of de Biron in the ſiege of it, for ſome months, that he was obliged to compound for its remaining a neutral place, for commerce; with the free exerciſe of both religions, and under the cuſtody of a captain named by the King of Navarre †. It is hardly to be imagined what inceſſant toils were undergone by this Prince, in reinforcing Marans, and animating the garriſon, by his preſence, to ſo obſtinate a reſiſtence. He often penetrated through the poſts of the enemy, and, with no leſs danger, traverſed the canals and marſhes that changed their depth with the tides. It was thus he early acquired the habit of ſuperintending every military operation in perſon; which he never after laid aſide.

In this field of hardy exploits, the fame acquired by ſeveral of the proteſtant chiefs and officers, was little inferior to that of the two princes. By acting their part as captains, and often ſharing the toils of the common ſoldiers; every function of war, and the camp, was familiar to them. When we conſider how eminent the names of ſome of them afterwards became in the ſtate; we are apt to regret, that ſuch men were put to the neceſſity of expoſing their lives, conſtantly, to the greateſt dangers of the military ſervice. How fatal

* D'Aubigné, liv. 3. chap. 6.

† Mem. de la ligue, tom. 1. p. 462.

fatal it proved *, at this time, to ſome families of their nobility; we may judge from one example, among others, which are mentioned. The Prince of Condé having, at the head of part of his troop, charged the catholic regiment of Tiercelin, threw it into diſorder; from which it began to recover, within a mile of the garriſon of Xaintes. Though ſo near aſſiſtance; upon the Count de Laval joining the Prince, it was aſſaulted again. Its colours were wreſted from the enſign, by the perſonal vigour of the former chieftain; fifty of its ſoldiers were killed on the ſpot; and the reſt of them driven into the town. But two of the Count's brothers, of the moſt promiſing characters, were mortally wounded in this combat. The advice of the death of another of them, received a few days before, rendered his heart more ſenſible to the anguiſh he felt at ſuch a loſs. Though of the moſt manly ſpirit, a deep melancholy ſeized him, and put an end to his life, in eight days. One tomb received the four brothers; in their tender age, forced into exile, as being the obnoxious progeny of the valiant d'Andelot, and nephews of the Admiral Coligni; and now, when reſtored to their country, and their paternal honours, again abſorbed by a calamitous fate; which buried, with them, almoſt every branch of their family and name.

fatal death of four brothers.

In a nation of warriors, ſays a hiſtorian of theſe times, and an active † officer; and where military employment and renown were reckoned chiefly honourable, the gentry and the ſoldiers, like animals bred to the game, become attached to the chiefs who lead them to the field; more than to the prince or to the ſtate, that maintains them. As the theatre of the civil wars verified this obſervation; and the name of the King, who declined the honours of the field, was obſcured, amidſt the renown of ſo many warlic chieftains; Henry could only leſſen this diſadvantage, by placing his fa-

* Ibid. tom. 2. p. 173.

† D'Aubigné, tom. 3. liv. 1. chap. 12.

BOOK II.

1586.

The King's two favourites appointed to the command of of armies. September.

favourites at the head of his armies. By this means, he thought a proper check might be put on the commanders, in the intereſt of the league, whom he was obliged to employ. At this time, the armies of the Dukes Joyeuſe and Eſpernon, deſtined for Languedoc, and Provence, were put in motion. To the latter, the extraordinary commiſſion of Governour of Provence, and Admiral of the Levant, was granted by the King *. Beſides great parade about the equipages, and the military ſtores of theſe favourites, Henry himſelf accompanied their proceſſion to Lyons. Nothing ſo much burleſqued war, as the train of this Prince's houſhold. The dreſs in which Sully deſcribes him in his cabinet, was not a greater medley betwixt that of a King and of a capuchin †, than the appearance he made in this march with his troops, was fantaſtical and ridiculous.

Henry's ſingularities.

He carried along with him whole kennels of little dogs, of which he was fond; and added to them ſuch a number of thoſe bred about Lyons, that their proviſions and their keepers were ſaid to form a new department of the houſhold. By ſuch extravagant conceits, and frivolous amuſements, he reverſed that character of gravity, recollection, and judgement, which he otherwiſe ſuſtained in public; and expoſed himſelf to the ſarcaſms of the vulgar, and to the ſcorn of the military chiefs. In the fancy he took to miniature pieces of painting, a ſimilar inſanity with reſpect to the expenſive purchaſe of them was ſhown; and de Thou ‡ aſcribes it, perhaps unjuſtly, not to his taſte and admiration of the fine art itſelf, but to his paſſionate fondneſs for rarities. The manner in which he beſtowed the moſt expuiſite ſpecimens of the art, found only in ſome prayer-books, in manuſcript, and preſerved in the cabinets of the curious, ſeemed indeed to be no indication of his having valued them like a *virtuoſo*. He cauſed them to be cut out; and, joining ſeveral of them together, as one portrait, he paſted them upon the walls of his chapels and private oratories.

Henry's

* Ibid. † Thuan. lib. 85. ‡ Ibid.

Henry's humour, ill correſponding with the turbulent ſcene that was now carried on in the kingdom; and the political views he thought attainable by the war, being often rendered dark and doubtful; his diſlike and hatred of the Hugonots were, ſometimes, ſurmounted by fits of indignation againſt the league. The * informations given him about the practices and deſigns of the Duke of Guiſe, and his partizans, were ſufficient to throw him into theſe alarms. Under the pretence of ſecuring the frontier againſt a German army, and of rooting out the ſectaries; this chieftain had actually poſſeſſed himſelf of ſeveral places in the territory of Sedan, and in Burgundy. It was alſo known, that he attempted to ſeduce, by tempting promiſes, ſome of the King's principal officers to his party. Apprehenſive, from various reports of the preſumption, and treachery of the Duke; Henry †, ready to adopt expedients, had entered into a private treaty with the King of Navarre; for retaining, between them, ſuch a number of Swiſs troops, as, together with thoſe they could command in France, might be ſufficient to ſubdue the power of the league. But, timid and perplexed in his reſolutions, he ventured not to bring this meaſure to any concluſion. He liſtened to a different ſcheme, probably ſuggeſted by the Queen-mother, for engaging the King of Navarre to a change of his religion; a point ſo often urged in vain, and lately rejected by that prince. To make a freſh experiment upon him, Catherine proceeded to hold the conference of St Brix, in Xaintonge, in the end of December.

A negotiation for peace permitted by Henry.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 514. † Mem. de Sully, liv. 2.

CHAP. III.

Conference for Peace at St Brix.——War renewed.——Cabal of the ſixteen Partizans at Paris.——Henry informed of the Plots of the League.——His Embarraſment.——Victory of the King of Navarre in the Battle of Coutras.——Advancement of the German Auxiliaries of the Proteſtants.——Their Mutiny and Diſſipation.——Henry's Conduct in the Campaign againſt them.

BOOK II. 1586. Decemb. 22.

THE unprincipled, and the unſtable, eaſily perſuade themſelves, that a ſmall variation of circumſtances may be ſufficient to make others embrace, as they do, reſolutions, which they have proteſted againſt; and to change, at once, the great line of their character and conduct. Hence, it would appear, that the Queen-mother, and others of the court, preſumed, that the King of Navarre, invironed with difficulties and dangers *, would, at length, be inclined to extricate himſelf, by renouncing his religion, and throwing himſelf upon the will of the King, tho' he ſhould loſe the ſupport of the proteſtant party, and ſhould truſt his future fortune to the uncertain determinations of the court. They, who ſhaped all their counſels by emergencies, had no conception of invariable adherence to a plan, formed with prudence; nor of encountering dangers, which could be diverted by a degree of ſubmiſſion. Henry of Bourbon, however, had learned, that perſeverance was a part of political wiſdom; and had already ſtrove, with too many difficulties, to yield upon ſome apparent increaſe of them.

In the conference at St Brix, we are not diſtinctly informed, upon what ſpecial footing the Queen-mother treated with Henry, about

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 81. Matthieu, ibid.

1587.

Conference with the Queen-mother.

bout the renunciation of his religion and his party *. According to d'Avila, ſhe propoſed, as a new and plauſible ſcheme for his advantage, and for peace, that he ſhould be divorced from his Queen, and eſpouſe her grand-daughter of Lorain; which meaſure, with that of his converſion, ſhe inſiſted, would diſunite the league, and remove every objection to the general acknowledgement of his title to the ſucceſſion. If we may judge from the details that are given of the conference by ſeveral hiſtorians †; there was no ſuch good underſtanding in it betwixt the parties, as might have been occaſioned from this motion; and we may preſume, that, if it was made by Catherine, the King of Navarre had reaſon to conſider it as one of her artifices; to perplex his reſolutions, and to gain time. It appears, by ſeveral repartees, which the latter made to her, that he was rather diſguſted than pleaſed with the conditions ſhe propoſed. When in anſwer to his complaints about the treaty of Nemours, as contrary to the declarations of the court to him, the Queen aſked, if he meant to charge her with breach of faith: "I may perhaps, ſaid he, complain, with ſome reaſon, of your Majeſty's age, as rather injurious to your memory of the promiſes given me." To her arguments for changing his religion, drawn from the reaſonableneſs and neceſſity of the meaſure, he replied: "Is it reaſonable to do that under all the appearance of compulſion; which ought only to be done from free will and choice? and, ſhould any neceſſity oblige me to yield more to the arms of my enemies, than to the commands of the King?" "Your power, ſaid Catherine, again, is not equal to that of a Mayor in Rochelle; and you cannot act there as you will." "Pardon me, anſwered Henry; for I *will* always that which I can perform." "You can order no impoſt in that town," addded the Duke of Nevers, in his Italian accent. "It

January.

* Liv. 8. † Matthieu, p. 520. Mem. de la ligue, ibid.

Book II. 1587.

is true, replied the King, and, therefore, no financier of Italy is admitted amongſt us."

The conference was, ſoon after, remitted, on the King of Navarre's part, to the agency of the Viſcount de Turenne; who attended the Queen-mother at Fontenay *. But it produced no other effect, than that of conſuming the time of a truce, which had been agreed upon. The foreign army now expected, on the one ſide, and the intelligence received of the intrigues fomented by the chiefs of the league, on the other, rendered the agreement of the parties more difficult than in the beginning of the interview. The murmurs, and feared inſurrections of the Pariſians, on account of this ſhew of a treaty with the Hugonots, obliged the Queen-mother to return to the metropolis; with more haſte than ſhe had come from it into Xaintonge.

After a momentary reſpite; the martial enterprizes were renewed by the proteſtant chiefs in Xaintonge and Poictou, with amazing ſpirit †. With the help of a few large cannon from Rochelle; Talmont, Chizé, St Maixant, and Fontenay-le-Comte, were beſieged, and quickly reduced by the King of Navarre. Their conqueſts being extended to Poictou; the proteſtant gentry, who were numerous in that province, forgot their late diſaſter; and flocked, in large parties, to the field. The receſs of the catholic army, after their winter-campaigns, afforded an opportunity of ſucceſs; which was induſtriouſly improved by them. From habits of hardineſs, more invincible by toils, than any other military body, and having an impulſe to bravery, beyond that of the common ſoldiers of the King's armies; their reſolute undertakings, and their bold atchievements, generally ſurpaſſed any computation of their military ſtrength, which their

February.

March.

April.

The war vigorouſly renewed.

* De Aubigné, ibid. chap. 7.

† Ibid. chap. 13.

their adverſaries could form. At this period, the valour of the chiefs, and their followers, exceeded any former inſtances of it *. It is obſerved in the memoirs of Sully, that the King of Navarre was frequently heard dictating, verbally, from the mines his ſoldiers had made under the ramparts and towers, the capitulations he would grant, to the defenders of them. For the eſcalade of walls, ſays d'Aubigné, the ſoldiers truſted, commonly, to ſuch ladders as they could find about the ſuburbs of places, or the villages. Single men among them often mounted the ramparts before the reſt, and daringly leapt down, or deſcended into the inward ſide of them; where the enemy ſtood in files to oppoſe them. It was by ſuch exertions of their courage and vigour, that the weaker party ſupported their martial fame, and gained advantages, in ſhort intervals of time, when their antagoniſts were unprepared, that could not be wreſted from them, without the employment and operations of regular armies. Not long ſuffered to keep the field at preſent, without the oppoſition of ſuperior forces; the Duke of Joyeuſe, recalled to the court, was ſent to take the command of the King's troops in Poictou †. It was a point of ambition with this favourite, to have this department of the war aſſigned him; in which he knew, that any advantage gained by him, would be extolled with the higheſt praiſes of the Pariſians. His policy, in contradiction to his rival Eſpernon, made him ſecretly court the applauſe of the violent catholicks; and he imagined he might ſhare it with the Guiſes; eſpecially after his marriage with the Princeſs of Vadêmont, of the Lorain family.

Bravery of the proteſtants in it.

Before proceeding to relate the campaign undertaken by the Duke of Joyeuſe, againſt the two Princes of Bourbon, it is neceſſary to attend

* Ibid. liv. 2.
Mem. de Sully, liv. 2.

† D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 14. compared with

Book II.
1587.

Cabal of the ſixteen partizans of Paris.

attend to what had paſſed in the metropolis; where the partizans of the league fed that flame of fanatical zeal, which embroiled the whole kingdom. The cabal of the ſixteen aſſociates of Paris, and the endeavours uſed by them, to work up the minds of the people to their enthuſiaſtic purpoſes, have been mentioned *. The account that is given, by contemporary writers, of the ſelf importance of this low faction, of their credulity, of their defaming ſpirit, of their mixed aims, and motives, and of their violent and headlong reſolutions, may be conſidered as a juſt picture of the ſeditious, of the ſame claſs of people, in every age, and country. Having, as they imagined, gained an influence among the ſeveral corporations of Paris, ſufficient to command its ſixteen wards; they began to throw off all the reſtraints of fear and caution; under which they had acted for a conſiderable time. By the Duke of Guiſe †, an artful agent, Meneville, had been ſent among them; and the Spaniſh ambaſſador had not failed to encourage them, by his promiſes. Confident, from their ſucceſsful progreſs, and hoping to engage, by the emiſſaries they had employed, various other cities in their confederacy; they thought of nothing leſs, than to reduce the King and court under their power; and, by one ſtroke, to effectuate their wild ſchemes, about the reformation of the ſtate, and the advancement of the honour and glory of the catholic church. They had provided money, and increaſed the ſtore of arms in the city; and waited, impatiently, for the arrival of the Duke of Guiſe, to direct, or aſſiſt them, in executing their treaſonable intentions.

This precipitant procedure of the Pariſian conſpirators was neither wiſhed, nor expected by the Duke of Guiſe. Dreading, with reaſon, the conſequences of their impetuoſity; he declined their invitations, to come into the city. Upon this diſappointment, they applied themſelves

* Preuves de la Satyre Menippée, duodec. edit. a Ratisbone, tom. 3. p. 436.
† Thuan. Genevae fol. edit. tom. 4. p. 170.

ſelves to the Duke of Mayenne. Ignorant of their correſpondence with his brother *, and aſtoniſhed at the very mention of their projects; he would have departed, immediately, from Paris; but a letter from Guiſe, urging his ſtay, for a little, ſtopt him. He ſoon perceived, what he had feared, from the change of the guards, and watches, about the city, and the drawing together of ſome troops, at St Denis, that the court was not only alarmed, but that, the plots of theſe rude conſpirators, with whom he now converſed, had been diſcovered. Nothing could exceed the perplexity into which he was thrown. He feigned ſickneſs, and abſtained from going to the court; and thought of retreating ſecretly out of the city. But a confeſſion of ſome guilt, and diſhonour, ſeemed to attend this reſolution. At laſt, ſome aſſurances of favour, given him by the Queen-mother, encouraged him to preſent himſelf before the King, and aſk the uſual leave of departing into his government. In granting it, Henry, without any emotion, ſaid to him, "Do you, then, my couſin, in this abrupt manner, forſake the good league of Paris?" Appearing not to underſtand what was ſaid by the King, he withdrew in confuſion. When he had got without the gates of the city, the ſenſe of what he had ſuffered, and his indignation at being ſo expoſed, by a caſual intercourſe with the diſtracted demagogues, made him ſwear an oath, before Baſſompierre, who attended him, "That nothing ſhould ever, again, oblige him to hazard his fame and his life, within the ſame walls, with ſuch blind and furious aſſociates."

The Duke of Mayenne intangled with them.

To ſuch a heighth, it is certain, that the partizans of the league, in Paris, carried their ſedition, above a year before the *barricades* †. The King's officers, and parties of the guards, who were ſent to ſeize ſome of the incendiaries, had been reſiſted, more than once, by the

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 525. † Preuves de Satyre Menip. ibid. p. 442.

Book II. 1587.

the insurrections of the populace. But no such positive, nor particular information was given to the court, about the intrigues and disaffection of the sixteen, as at this period. Nicholas Poulain, Lieutenant to the Prêvot of the Isle of France, carried secret information to the King, of their present audacious conspiracy; and it was by means of him, that the subsequent discoveries were made. The remissness of Henry appeared in nothing more, than in his using no means, either to correct or to terrify the delinquents; except by appearing to guard against their assaults. The enthusiastic party imputed his forbearance, not to his negligence, or his lenity, but to a divine power, that restrained him *. Matthieu alledges that he waited the arrival of the Duke of Espernon, with some troops, from Provence; before he would proceed to any act of vengeance.

May.

Duke of Joyeuse's first expedition in Poictou.

The army, with which the Duke of Joyeuse renewed the campaign in Poictou, against the King of Navarre †, amounted to near nine thousand men. Upon the approach of this superior force; the latter showed his attention, and prudence, by slighting various small places, he had taken, and, in others, leaving only such weak parties of his soldiers, as might retard the progress of the enemy. To Joyeuse, the state of the campaign appeared, altogether, such as he wished. No army appearing to combat him in the field, he saw only, such small garrisons of the enemy, as he could easily vanquish; and, inconsiderable as these conquests might be, he knew they would bear some name, when obtained by him against the King of Navarre. In a short time, he took, by assault, or composition, St Maixant, Tonnai-Charante, and Maillezais. The two regiments of Charbonnieres, and des Bauries, ordered to retire into the first of these places, were overtaken by him ‡. Exposed, by an unseasonable piece of bravery, to the assault of his whole army; they defended themselves, with desperate resolution, for two days; and yielded,

* Ibid. p. 525. † D'Aubigné, ibid. ‡ Ibid.

yielded, at laſt, as much to famine, as to the power of the enemy. When interrogated about the ſhameful maſſacre of two hundred of theſe brave ſoldiers, in cold blood; Joyeuſe is ſaid to have anſwered, "I muſt be praiſed, as well as others, in the pulpits of Paris; and it is well known, that ſuch a paſſage in the field, againſt the Hugonots, though the humane may condemn it, is much more a recommendation of a general, to our preachers, than clemency." Having his head too much turned upon the court, to prolong the campaign; he ſoon thought of withdrawing from it, with the honour he had gained *. But the King of Navarre, who watched this opportunity of attacking him in his retreat, quickly followed his ſquadrons with twelve hundred horſe. Several ſcattered companies of them were routed on their march; and, which was a ſignal diſhonour, Joyeuſe's own troop, with his white ſtandard, was entirely defeated. His army, now vaſtly diminiſhed, and broken into parties, was frequently aſſaulted, in its head quarters; and Lavardin, his Lieutenant, was forced to take ſhelter, with the remainder of it, at la Haye, in Touraine. While Joeyuſe was gone to recount his victories, in Paris, people were amazed to hear, that the King of Navarre's troops were advanced to the banks of the Loire. Their interception of the baggage of the Duke de Mercoeur, in its paſſage over that river, rendered this expedition no leſs lucrative to the ſoldiers, than it was honourable for the commanders. The acceſſion of the Prince of Condé's brother, the Count de Soiſſons, to their camp, at this juncture, alſo tended to encourage and ſtrengthen their party. Educated at court, with his younger brother, the Prince of Conti, in the catholic faith; his joining the King of Navarre ſeemed to flow from a ſenſe of the perſecution raiſed againſt the Princes of Bourbon. He came, attended with two hundred gentlemen, from Beauſe, and Normandy. Beſides aſſuring them, that Conti would

1587. Auguſt.

* Ibid. chap. 15. Mem. de Sully, ibid.

Book II. 1587.

follow his example, he brought the important intelligence, that the auxiliary army of the Germans was not only upon foot, but actually on its march to the frontier of the kingdom.

Henry is embarraſſed in his counſels.

In the mean time, the King ſtill ſupporting the appearance of eaſe, and tranquility, while war overſpread the kingdom, was, in reality, more perplexed, and began to be, ſecretly, more agitated, than any of the combatants in the field. Peace, or war, preſenting equal difficulties to his mind; his doubt, and uncertainty, on which ſide to turn his reſolution, was increaſed by new emergencies. His deſire to treat with the King of Navarre, and the abrupt concluſion of the conference for peace, diſcovered his fluctuation *. Yet we have ſufficient authority to believe that, at this juncture, Henry exerted himſelf with greater ſpirit, and uſed more vigour and addreſs to allay the ferment of the kingdom, than he had hitherto ſhown. He obliged the chief partizans of the Duke of Guiſe, to a declaration, that they did not diſapprove his meaſures for peace. At the ſame time, finding that they ſtill inſiſted upon their pretended fears about the Catholic religion; he endeavoured to gain over the Duke of Guiſe himſelf, both by repreſenting to him the neceſſity of domeſtic peace, in order to deliver the kingdom from the ravage of a foreign army, and by making him the moſt liberal offers of rank and preferment for himſelf, and thoſe of his family †. It was at Meaux, where the Duke preſented himſelf before the King, after ſuſpending his hoſtilities againſt the Duke of Bouillon, that theſe ſtrenuous ſollicitations were uſed by Henry; and which, though joined with intreaty, he found, at laſt, to be ineffectual. Hence we may account for the conference at St Brix, and for the rapid tranſition from it, which Henry made, to the greateſt warlike preparations. After unuſual efforts

* Matthieu, liv. 8. p. 517. † Matthieu, ibid. p. 529. Thuan. lib. 87. p. 186.

1587.

efforts to overcome the Duke of Guiſes's oppoſition to peace; his jealouſy, and his indignation, againſt this chieftain, roſe to a higher pitch, by the diſappointment of them. Rouſed from his wonted indolence, he became anxious about his own ſafety, and about the fate of the kingdom. The guard of forty-five gentlemen, for attending upon him, was, ſoon after this, by the Duke of Eſpernon's advice, eſtabliſhed. Diſtruſtful of almoſt the whole of his counſellors, he bent his thoughts, to ſcrutinize every propoſal, that was made to him; and to obviate apparent difficulties, by expedients of his own contrivance. The inſtructive, but unhappy example of the conſequence of irreſolution, and remiſſneſs; he was forced, now, into the oppoſite extreme; and paſſed whole nights, without ſleep, and ſolitary, in his palace; engaged in a train of perplexing deliberations. As he found the war, which the adverſaries of his dignity, and of his crown, wiſhed to promote, impoſſible to be avoided by him; he is ſaid to have ſoothed his mind, with the reflection, contained in that Latin ſentence, often repeated by him, *De inimicis meis, vindicabo inimicos meos.* I will, thus, avenge myſelf of my enemies, by the hands of my enemies.

In this indignant temper, Henry determined to muſter ſuch a number of forces, as might be ſufficient, both to oppoſe the foreign army, and to combat the main power of that party, at home, to which it marched, as an auxiliary body. He, alſo, reſolved to take upon himſelf the command of the principal diviſion of his troops, which were to act againſt the Germans. Such diligence was uſed by him, that the levies of foreign, and domeſtic regiments being, in a ſhort time, completed*, the whole army, deſigned to guard the frontiers, was ranged in three ſeparate bodies; which took their ſtations, at Gien on the Loire, at Troyes, in Champagne, and at

The King is rouzed to take the field. June 23.

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 199.

Book II. 1587. Chuamont in Baſſigny. The two commanders, under the King, were the Dukes of Montpenſier, and of Guiſe. It appeared that Henry, as if awaked to his early ſenſe of military renown, was diſpoſed to act his part in the campaign, with ardor ſuitable to the occaſion of it; when the honour of his crown was inſulted, and the kingdom menaced with an invaſion of foreigners. His attention, and care were no leſs manifeſted in ordering a ſufficient body of troops, to watch the motions of the King of Navarre; whoſe attempt to penetrate through the kingdom, and to join the German army, though the hardieſt one that could well be imagined, was to be feared. In place of Joyeuſe, the Marſhal D'Aumont was deſtined by the King to this important command; but the gratification of the favourite, in a point, which he thought intereſting to his fame, could not be declined by a Prince of Henry's facility.

The defeating the King of Navarre's purpoſe, or the vanquiſhing him, in a pitched battle, in the field, was the ſanguine hope of Joyeuſe, now elevated with the eulogies of the Pariſian preachers; and the particular object of his ambition. The laſt of theſe views had the apparent approbation of Henry *; who, at this juncture, adapting his public language, and his orders, to the tone of the violent, gave Joyeuſe his commiſſion, backed with a command, to fight the King of Navarre, wherever an opportunity for it ſhould offer. To judge, with certainty, about the point of Henry's ſecret concern for that Prince, when he would, thus, be puſhed to the laſt extremity, is a matter of difficulty. The ſpeculations upon it, and upon the motive of again employing Joyeuſe † in this campaign, which we find in Sully's Memoirs, and in other hiſtories, are doubtful and ambiguous. D'Avila has worked up an account of the private ‡ inſtructions given by the King, to Lavardin, upon this head, which is

* D'Aubigné, ibid. liv. 1. chap. 15. Matthieu, ibid. p. 533. † Liv. 2.
‡ Ibid.

1587.

Joyeuſe again takes the command in Poictou.

is hardly conſiſtent with itſelf *; and other hiſtorians, with more probability, alledge that the Marſhal Matignon was the perſon entruſted with Henry's concealed intention; that the King of Navarre's adherents ſhould not be, wholly, overpowered. It would appear that the King, ſolicitous, and reſentful of the invaſion of the kingdom, by the Germans, meant, in the orders he gave, to oblige the latter to abandon his ſuppoſed reſolution of leading his troops to join them. But, not eaſily deterred, the King of Navarre drew together the greateſt number of troops he could find, fit for ſuch an expedition; and directed his march towards the borders of the Lyoneſe; in order to reach the ſources of the Loire. When only advanced to the confines of Perigord; he found Joyeuſe's army puſhing forward, by haſty marches, to intercept his progreſs. So near did the two armies approach each other on the nineteenth of October; that their advanced guards ſtrove for the poſſeſſion of the village of Coutras; ſituated near the ford of the river Drogne. Though firſt maſters of this advantageous poſt, the catholic troops were driven from it. When the King of Navarre moved, with his whole army, over the Drogne to the village, Joyeuſe, aſſured in his hopes of victory, ſignified his ſatisfaction, that, as there was † another river cloſe in front, the enemy could not eſcape him. Without waiting the arrival of the Marſhal Matignon, the reſolution to fight was immediately taken in his council of war; and orders were iſſued to his troops, to prepare for the battle, by break of day.

October 19.

October 20. Tueſday. The battle of Coutras is fought.

The two armies nearly equalled each other in infantry; but that of the proteſtants was doubled, by ‡ the number of Joyeuſe's gallant troops of cavalry. The young nobility, from various quarters, whoſe favour the Duke had acquired, by his courteſy and largeſſes, had put themſelves in array; to honour the campaign in which he com-

* P. Daniel, ibid. p. 245. Vide l' Ecluſe's note on Sully, ibid. † Thuan. lib. 87. p. 180. ‡ Ibid. Thuan. D'Aubigné, chap. 16.

BOOK II. 1587.

commanded. Affecting, after the manner of the nation, the greateſt gaiety in their military equipage; the harneſs of their horſes, their poliſhed armour, and weapons, and the finery of their ſilken enſigns, exceeded the moſt brilliant ſhow of them in the civil wars. The different aſpect of the proteſtant troops, from this ſplendid one of the catholics, is obſerved by the hiſtorians. The plain armour and accoutrements worn by them, were grimly variegated with ſpots of rain, and with the duſt of the field; and, in the dreſs of the officers and of the ſoldiers, little difference could be perceived *. From an exceſs of imagination, ſome hiſtorians compare this contraſt of the two armies, to that of the troops of Darius and of Alexander; though effeminacy and want of courage, exemplified in the Aſiatic ſoldiers, could, by no means, be aſcribed to either of the former. It was Joyeuſe's preſumption, and the rawneſs and inexperience of many of his officers and ſoldiers, which gave the proteſtants ſo much the advantage over them in this engagement. It is related, that ſome of his officers, little acquainted with their enemy, interpreted the prayers and ſinging of pſalms in the proteſtant batallions, to be a mark of terror, or deſpondency among them; until Vaux, an old ſoldier, corrected their miſtake. "I have reaſon, ſaid he, from many rencounters with the Hugonots, to know, that they never fight more reſolutely, than when they pray before the battle." As little converſant did they ſhow themſelves, in the proper arts of the field. Embarraſſed, and ſlow in their movements, they allowed the proteſtant commanders, immediately before the action, to make ſome change in the diſpoſition of their troops, and to remove their cannon to more advantageous ground.

When the charge enſued; the advantage at firſt gained by the bravery of the catholics, was loſt by their want of military ſkill †.

It

* Matthieu, ibid. D'Aubigné, chap. 17. † Ibid. D'Aubigné.

1587. and gained by the King of Navarre.

It appeared in the ſhock of Joyeuſe's own gendarmerie, with that of the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé, how much inferior they were to the latter, in diſcipline, ſteadineſs, and vigour. In coming to their charge, they uſed a long and irregular career, which weakened its force; and, when cloſed with the enemy, they found themſelves entangled by the uſeleſs length of their lances. Their adverſaries, on the contrary, in more compacted ſquadrons, advanced ſlowly, repreſſing the vigour of their horſes, and retaining that of their arms, till they came within twenty paces of the enemy; and then bore the power of their ſhorter and ſtronger lances againſt them. The effect of this ſuperior diſcipline was quickly proved; by the total confuſion, and overthrow of the catholic ſquadrons of horſe; though ſo much more numerous than thoſe of the proteſtants. The action was bloody to the vanquiſhed. Upwards of four hundred nobility and gentlemen were killed; and it is obſerved, as a proof of their bravery, that more of them lay dead in the field than periſhed in the purſuit. Joyeuſe himſelf, with his brother St Sauveur, was among the former; though different accounts are given of the particular manner of his death. The ſlaughter was the more extended, from the remembrance the proteſtant infantry retained of the late butchery of two of their regiments, by Joyeuſe's troops. No fewer than three thouſand of the catholic foot, are reckoned to have been cut in pieces. Their whole army did not exceed eight thouſand men.

In the beginning of the action, when the ſquadrons of the proteſtant chiefs, Tremouille and Turenne, were pierced by the charge of Lavardin; the behaviour of a company of twenty Scottiſh gentlemen, who fought on the ſide of the former, attracted the eyes of many in the field *. Though placed behind the reeling troops, and

* D'Aubigné, chap. 17. Matthieu, ibid. p. 554.

BOOK II. 1587.

and expoſed to the ſhock of the victors; they alone were obſerved not to be driven from their ground. But their cuiraſſes being only doublets of buff, with thin plates of metal between the folds; they were, almoſt every one of them, wounded. The King of Navarre ſaw, with regret, the Maſter of Wemyſs, their captain, carried off, in his wounds, upon the ſhoulders of David Herriot, one of his attendants; and he is ſaid, from obſerving the ſolicitude and care of the latter for his maſter's life, to have engaged him into his ſervice. What this Scottiſh troop ſuffered, may be reckoned the hardeſt part of the ruffle, ſuſtained by the conquerors, in the famous battle of Coutras; for their whole loſs is ſaid to have been only that of five gentlemen, and thirty ſoldiers.

Various paſſages, illuſtrating the ſpirit and valour of the two Princes of Bourbon, and of ſeveral of their officers in this battle, might be related. But the praiſe the Princes merited, by their humane and generous behaviour to the vanquiſhed, deſerves more to be celebrated *. The manner in which the Prince of Condé was reconciled to the catholic captain, St Luc, whom he hated more than any other perſon, ſhowed an exertion of the principle of honour, that was peculiar to thoſe martial times. St Luc, ſeeing the battle loſt, had reaſon to dread the Prince's reſentment; if he was taken in the purſuit, and brought before him as a priſoner. He thought it unmanly, without apparent neceſſity, to throw himſelf upon his mercy. But, eyeing the Prince ardent in the purſuit, he, by a ſkillful career, puſhed him from his horſe; and, before Condé knew who had been his antagoniſt, he threw himſelf on the ground, and preſented his gauntlet to him. Overcome by his ſpirited addreſs; the Prince embraced him, and gave him all aſſurances of his friendſhip †. In care of the wounded, and courteſy to the priſoners; the King

* D'Aubigné, ibid. † Mem. de la ligue, p. 243. D'Avila. Thuan. ibid.

King of Navarre ſurpaſſed any known examples of generoſity. Almoſt all the latter, who were of note, he ſet at liberty, or paid their ranſom. To ſome of them, preſents were given; and, to thoſe that had ſignalized their courage, their enſigns were reſtored. His moderation, after ſo compleat a victory, amazed the catholicks. Tho', being the firſt of its kind gained by the proteſtants, it eſtabliſhed his fame in arms; no expreſſion ſavouring of vanity was heard to fall from him. When aſked, what terms he would now demand of the court? "The ſame, replied he, which I would have wiſhed, upon the loſs of a battle; and no other than thoſe contained in the edict 1577." The dead bodies of Joyeuſe and his brother being put into leaden coffins, were tranſported to Paris; where the funeral honours, performed by the King's orders, correſponded to his former favour for Joyeuſe. But the hiſtorians agree, that his late intoxication with the praiſes of the incendiary faction, diminiſhed Henry's concern for his death.

By the victory of Coutras, the affairs of the proteſtants attained an elevation, ſuperior to any former appearance of their good fortune, during the civil wars. Beſides the martial fame it gave them, the difficulties of joining the German army were entirely removed by it. No body of troops could now be ſpared by the court, to oppoſe their paſſage through the kingdom. The ſcattered parties of the catholicks, in the provinces, could not ſtand in their way; and provided, as they were, with good artillery, ſeveral towns upon the Loire were ready to yield to their firſt aſſault. The poſſeſſion of ſome of theſe garriſons was all they wanted, to open a free communication with the auxiliary army; which conſiſted of near thirty thouſand combatants *. In conjunction with it, the victorious bands of the proteſtants, would have gone near to have given the

Advantage of the victory of Coutras.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 530.

Book II. 1587.

law to their adverſaries in the field. The King of France was well known to be forced into the unneceſſary, and unnatural war, with the preſumptive heir of the crown. To many of the ſober catholicks, the preſent dangerous conflagration of the kingdom, was more imputed to the obſtinacy of the chiefs of the league, in their turbulent and ambitious purpoſes, than to any unreaſonable demands of the proteſtants. A party of them went farther. In the* grand queſtion, Whether, under a neceſſity inevitable, it was moſt ſafe and honourable for the King, to be conſtrained by the Duke of Guiſe, and the league, or by the heir of the crown, at the head of the proteſtants? they were known to hold the latter opinion. Foreſeeing, from the paſt, the future miſeries of the kingdom, and aware of the train that was laid, by diſputing the title of the legitimate ſucceſſor, for the increaſe of diſcord; they wiſhed to behold the balance of power caſt on that ſide, where it was likely to produce the leaſt evil to the kingdom. Conſidering the honourable character of the Prince, who, by his valour, ſupported the dignity of the crown in its preſent degradation; they were perſuaded, that his aſcendency, at this period, would be followed with no other conſequences, but thoſe which were deſireable; the deliverance of the King from the compulſion of the league, and the reſtoration of the public peace, upon the footing of the former edicts of toleration. Theſe are declared, by de Thou, to have been the ſentiments and wiſhes entertained by many real friends of the eſtabliſhed religion, and of the civil welfare of their country. They hoped, that the King of Navarre, after his ſignal victory, would ſoon find his way to the German army; which would put him into a condition to act the heroic part of reſcuing the King and the ſtate, from the thraldom of a violent and powerful faction.

If

* Thuan. lib. 87. p. 202.

If the King of Navarre had conceived this high view of the ſervice that might be done to the ſtate, and had any confidence in his ability to perform it, the diſappointment of his aim, eſpecially in the manner in which it happened, muſt have been extremely vexatious to him. The victorious troops of the proteſtants, inſtead of purſuing their march to the Loire, totally forſook the expedition, and broke up their camp. Upon what motives the chiefs acted, ſo contrary to their wonted reſolution, and to their common intereſt; and how far the King of Navarre exerted himſelf, with ſpirit ſuitable to the occaſion; the hiſtorians are either ſilent altogether, or, being contradictory to one another, have not ſufficiently explained *. Sully reſumes his former accuſation of the principal aſſociates of that prince; and aſcribes to their wild ſchemes, about forming independent principalities for themſelves, the confuſion of their counſels, and the ſeparation of their troops; which ſo unſeaſonably enſued. Not only the ſiniſter views of the Count de Soiſſons, in joining the proteſtant army; but the Prince of Condé's flights of ambition, are particularly inſiſted upon by him. But, as this charge, unſupported by other teſtimonies, is to be admitted with ſome reſerve; ſo it affords no proof, that the King of Navarre acquitted himſelf with the requiſite propriety and ſpirit at this conjuncture. When we look into other hiſtorians, a contrary opinion may be formed, from their account of ſome facts. Not only d'Aubigné †, but de Thou aſſerts, that the Prince of Condé was the perſon, who chiefly inſiſted in the council of war, for the immediate march of the army to the Loire; and the former adds, that he actually traverſed the Angoumois with his troops, and waited in vain for the arrival of the King of Navarre. It would ſeem ‡, that this prince having yet, as he afterwards expreſſed it, *deſires*, rather than *deſigns*, of grandeur, conſidered not, with attention, what he might have accompliſhed, by the improvement of ſo

Faulty conduct of the proteſtant chiefs.

* Liv. 3. † Lib. 87. p. 184. D'Aubigné, chap. 18. ‡ Mem. de Sully, liv. 4.

Book II. 1587.

favourable a tide of his fortune. Too negligently leaving the important point of the conduct of the foreign army unſettled, he betook himſelf to Bearn; where twenty-two ſtandards, taken from the vanquiſhed army, being preſented by him to la Foſſeuſe, the Counteſs of Guiche; it was not unjuſtly ſaid, that they were a robbery, committed by love, upon military fame.

The German army advances to the frontier.

From the middle of Auguſt, the German army had been advancing towards the frontier of Lorain; being, in the number and condition of its ſoldiers, ſuperior to any former body of auxiliaries from that country. But its ſluggiſh motions, with the incumbrance of its waggons and baggage, and its traverſe marches for commodious quartering, gave it more the appearance of a vaſt body of regular forragers of a country, than of troops engaged in a campaign, or expedition againſt an enemy. It would have required the preſence of the King of Navarre himſelf, to have quickened their progreſs *. Commanded in chief by the Baron d'Onaw, in place of Duke Caſimir; and, when they arrived in Lorain, tranſferred to the direction of the Duke de Boüillon, and a council of general officers; concord, ſubordination, and diſcipline, were, with difficulty, preſerved among them. Though the Count de Chatillon, the moſt expert and active of the younger officers in the proteſtant troops, ſoon joined them with a large body of French cavalry; their murmurs for not having a Prince of the blood to conduct them, and their propenſity to mutinies, upon ſlight occaſions, could not be reſtrained. By loſs of time, in conſultations and diſputes about their march, they found la Charité, a bridge-town upon the Loire, where they meant to paſs, ſtrongly reinforced with troops from the King's army. By Henry's orders, all the fords and paſſages over that river were either obſtructed, or demoliſhed †. The pro-

* Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 211.

† D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 19.

1587.

proper poſts were, every where, ſeized upon by his troops; and, in many places, entrenchments were formed around them. Being come to the command of his army at Gien, he ſhowed, that he had not altogether forgot his early education in the camp. With the advantage which the frequent halts and conteſts in the foreign army gave him; the meaſures taken by him became effectual for that total diſſipation of it, which ſoon enſued. Yet, though thus meriting the chief praiſe in the campaign, two exploits by the Duke of Guiſe were, by the prejudiced and the fanatical party, ſo extolled, that little or no ſhare of it was allowed to him.

Both theſe enterpriſes, performed by the Duke of Guiſe, were of that hazardous kind, which prudent commanders ſeldom or never undertake; and, when attempted by the bold and artful, prove often abortive. They were night-attacks; and the object of them was, the ſurpriſing the German general's head quarters; with the hope of killing, or taking him priſoner. The Duke, indeed, had a political reaſon to induce him to theſe efforts of his military ſkill; which he thought could not be diſpenſed with. Hitherto, nothing worthy of his high reputation, or correſpondent to the expectations of his party, had been atchieved by him againſt the foreign army*; which he always ſpoke of with contempt, and had promiſed to vanquiſh on the borders of the kingdom. With this motive, rendered ſtronger to him, by the King's activity and ſucceſs; he determined upon one aſſault of the enemy at Vimori, where d'Onaw was quartered; and, ſhortly after it, upon another at Auneau, in ſimilar circumſtances. When his trumpets ſounded to arms for the firſt; his brother, the Duke of Mayenne aſked him, what he meant, to do? I intend, ſaid the other, to aſſail the German general in his quarters. "You will not, replied Mayenne, in ſurpriſe, reſolve upon

Two exploits againſt the Germans by the Duke of Guiſe.

October 27.

* Mem. de la ligue, p. 219. Matthieu, p. 335.

Book II.
1587.

on ſuch an enterpriſe without mature deliberation." The Duke coolly anſwered; What, in ſuch a buſineſs, I cannot determine, in a quarter of an hour, I ſhall never be able to decide in my whole life." The diſpoſitions made by him for the attack, ſhowed as much military addreſs, as the nature of the action allowed *. But its ſucceſs, far from being ſuch as d'Avila repreſents, correſponded not to his hopes, and, much leſs, to the encomiums of his admirers. With the loſs of forty gentlemen, and two hundred of his ſoldiers, he pillaged, or burnt part of the baggage of the Germans; and carried off ſome of their horſes and drums, as trophies of his victory. At Auneau, the next enterpriſe, he found opportunity to uſe more ſtratagem; and to conduct the ſurpriſe of d'Onaw, in that town, in ſuch a manner, as not only compenſated for the little advantage gained by him in the former, but proved a conſiderable blow to the enemy. Seven ſquadrons of the Reiters, being either deſtroyed, or taken priſoners by him, and d'Onaw himſelf hardly eſcaping; he bore away ſo much booty, and ſo many waggons and chariots, that the exploit had all the appearance of a great triumph; though obtained only over a detachment of the German forces.

Before this blow was given to the van of the foreign army, its ruin, or diſſolution, ſeemed, from prevailing diſcontent, and diſcord, to be inevitable. The Swiſs troops, who were the flower of it, after the death of their Colonel, had entered into a treaty † with the King of France, for quitting the campaign. Being actually hired in the King of Navarre's name, for his Chriſtian Majeſty's ſervice, according to an agreement, between theſe Princes, already mentioned; they thought themſelves free of all obligation, when Henry oppoſed them. The arrival of the Prince of Conti, in the army, with the news of the victory of Coutras, only ſuſpended this negotiation

Mutiny of the foreign army.

* D'Aubigné, ibid. Matthieu, ibid. † Mem. de la ligue, p. 217. and 23.

1587.

tiation for their departure; which ſoon took place. Upon this reduction of the enemy's forces; Henry further exerted himſelf with ſuch addreſs, that the Germans themſelves were induced to treat with him about their retreat out of the kingdom. While he propoſed harder articles than thoſe granted to the Swiſs, they continued, for a little time, to act upon the defenſive, in the manner of fugitives. Forced, at laſt, to yield to his terms, they began, with their furled colours, to retire to the frontier; more ingloriouſly, than any of their adventurous predeceſſors had done. Harraſſed by the country-people, and infected with diſeaſes, from fatigue and hardſhips, many of them periſhed; and ſmall bodies of them only were able to reach Germany.

and its difficulties.

In the receſs of the foreign troops, while the other French commanders made a daſtardly ſurrender of their enſigns; the Count de Chatillon's reſolution to deliver up his to none, but the King of Navarre, ſignalized his bravery †. The proof of it, upon the whole, was ſuch, as might merit a particular epiſode. It may ſuffice to ſay, that the vigour of his father's mind ſhone forth in him; and that the Admiral Coligni's laſt campaign, the moſt hardy one undergone by him, was, at this time, emulated by the military action and fortitude of his ſon. To copy part of Matthieu's panegyric upon it, he made the circuit of a great part of France, by his double expedition to, and from, the foreign army; expoſed to aſſaults, ambuſhes, and obſtacles, from all quarters; and, having, at laſt, with a hundred and fifty horſe only, to encounter the various bodies of troops, which the Count de Tournon, and Mandelot, a veteran commander, threw in his way, he defeated the latter in the field, and penetrated through the remainder of his opponents, like a thunderbolt, that overthrows every thing before it. His valour attained the

Singular bravery of the Count de Chatillon.

defer-

† Matthieu, ibid. p. 337.

BOOK II. 1587.

deſerved ſucceſs, by his arriving at a place of ſafety in the Vivarez.

Decem. 23. Henry's conduct in the campaign laudable.

In the end of the year, Henry made his entry into Paris, in military parade; and merited the congratulations given him by the ſeveral orders of the city. It was certain, that the kingdom owed its deliverance to his preſence, and conduct in the campaign; which would have proved equally effectual to it, without the boaſted defeat of d'Onaw's ſquadrons by the Duke of Guiſe. The diſaffected faction appeared, for a while, to be abaſhed; when the memory of his early fame in the field was, thus, recalled to the minds of his ſubjects. Yet, with all the advantages which he had, as a hereditary Prince, to regain the affections of his people; it was not effectuated by this favourable diſplay of his character to them. So deeply rooted was the malignity of the vulgar againſt him; and ſo audacious the inſolence of faction; that a greater variation of his counſels and conduct, than he ſeemed capable of adopting, would, ſcarcely, have availed to remove the one, and to repreſs the other. Such is the unhappy conſequence of allowing the diſorders of government to continue, for a courſe of time, unreſtrained, and to become inveterate, through the negligence or the toleration of them.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Duke of Guiſe promotes his Projects of Ambition.—Fatal Death of Henry; Prince of Condé.—Invectives and Satires againſt the King, and his Favourites.—Conſpiracies of the Pariſians.—The Barricades of Paris.—Ignominious Conceſſions by the King.

AFTER having repulſed the moſt numerous army that ever came from Germany, to ſuccour the proteſtants; and having forced the King of Navarre, and that party, to throw almoſt their whole fortune upon the hazard of a battle; it was preſumable, that the moſt violent catholics would be ſatisfied with Henry's conduct. But this hope, quickly, vaniſhed. As the wild, and enthuſiaſtic diſaffection of the zealots, to his government, ſeemed incurable; ſo the arrogance of the heads of faction was not abated. Senſible of their having controuled the will of the King, in the commencement of the war with the Hugonots, and of the public engagements he had laid himſelf under, for the utter demolition of that party; the latter were furniſhed with plauſible arguments, as well as prompted by their ambition, for perſiſting in their ſeditious demands *. While the Duke of Guiſe's atchievements, againſt the foreign army, were celebrated with the moſt extravagant praiſe; he thought it a favourable ſeaſon for holding a new aſſembly of his friends and partizans in the city of Nancy, in Lorain. Book II. 1588. January 29.

The conſultations at this meeting of the Lorain family, and their French adherents, were directed to two objects. One was, the ſeizing of the principalities of Sedan, and Jametz, fallen, by the death of the Duke of Bouillon, to his ſiſter, Charlotte de la Mark †, under the Conſultation of the Duke of Guiſe and his friends;

* Matthieu, p. 538. † Ibid.

Book II. 1588.

the diſadvantage of pupillage, and the weakneſs of her ſex. The other reſpected the ſupporting the intereſt of the league in France, and gratifying the expectations of their partizans in that kingdom; who hoped to ſee ſome further inthralment of the royal authority, to their arbitrary preſcriptions. It was a proof how daring their party was become, when they reſolved to proſecute, at the ſame time, both theſe purpoſes. Without regard to the honour of the crown of France, a war was to be undertaken againſt the heireſs of Sedan; though under the protection and wardſhip of Henry: And, notwithſtanding the late zeal and activity ſhown by this Prince, for vanquiſhing both the foreigners, and the Hugonots; a roll of new articles, under the pretext of accompliſhing the edict of catholic union, was to be preſented to him. It has been obſerved, how much this conceſſion of Henry's, which he thought would turn to his advantage, was improved againſt him. He found, according to the admonitions of ſome with whom he adviſed, and the predictions of the Hugonots, that, after ſo far eſpouſing the cauſe of the league, he muſt ſubmit to the dictates of its partizans, and undergo all their diſcipline. In * the firſt of theſe articles, he was called upon to unite himſelf more openly, and cordially, with the chiefs of the holy union. Perſons, offenſive to them, were required to be removed from the King's preſence, and from their public offices. The publication of the council of Trent, with ſome reſtrictions, was inſiſted upon; together with the erection of courts of holy inquiſition, in the larger cities in the kingdom. The ſupport of the war with the Hugonots, upon their confiſcated eſtates, and by taxes on thoſe of their known abettors, was demanded. The payment of an army, on the borders of Lorain, by the King, and ſurety-towns for the confederates, were, alſo, included in this new capitulation. More ſenſibly touched, than he appeared to have been with the treaty of

iſſues in more inſolent demands.

* Mem. de la ligue, p. 269. D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 21.

of Nemours, every ſingle condition in it, ſays Matthieu, coſt Henry a deep ſigh; who, feigning compliance, only evaded, by delays, the formal ratification of the articles of Nancy. 1588. February.

The appearance of the celebrated La Noüe, in vindication of the helpleſs Princeſs of Sedan, when threatened by the family of Lorain, illuſtrates the character of that chieftain, and exemplifies the behaviour of a military *worthy* of that age. Detained, for five years*, a captive in Flanders, and reduced to more than ordinary difficulties, by this misfortune, he found himſelf, ſoon after his deliverance, nominated executor of the Duke of Bouillon's laſt will, and tutor to the eſtates of his ſiſter. The eminent character of La Noüe had procured him this honourable truſt; which, however willing to execute, he thought he could not perform, on account of an engagement he had come under to the Duke of Lorain. The import of it was, that he ſhould not ſerve in war, againſt the Duke, or his dominions; unleſs obliged by his fidelity and homage to the crown of France, or his obedience to the King. As hoſtilities with the Duke, in defence of his ward, were inevitable; he heſitated, for ſome time, about the acceptance of his office. Yet it ſeemed allowable for him, with honour, to appear in the defence of the territory of Sedan; which was under the protection of France. He applied to the King to interpoſe, in this caſe of honour and humanity, for maintaining the rights of the Princeſs; and waited, in vain, for Henry's performing what he promiſed in her behalf. At laſt, her danger becoming imminent, his ſcruple, about the point of perſonal honour, ſo cheriſhed in modern ſtates, was overcome by a more generous principle of virtue, dictated by a ſenſe of juſtice, of duty, and of compaſſion. Having publiſhed a ſenſible and ſpirited vindication of his conduct; La Noüe proceeded to act the part that

Signal appearance of La Noüe.

* Mem. ibid. p. 291. D'Aubigné, chap. 22.

Book II. 1588.

an old Roman would have chose, for immortalizing his name. With the advantage of his military fame, and signal valour; he performed a service to the sister and heiress of the Duke de Bouillon, when assaulted by the forces of Lorain, which no other officer of his rank in the kingdom could have done; and gained just applause for the generous, and noble spirit shown by him.

In the mean time, the affairs of the protestants continued in a depressed condition. Their principal chiefs, acting without concert, and discouraged by the dissipation of the German army, undertook no considerable enterprise; and seemed, indeed, to be exposed, as much as at any former period, to a total overthrow, by the victorious forces of the catholics. When thus dispirited, the incident of the Prince of Condé's death *, apparently violent, and occasioned by poison given him, proved a sensible aggravation of their misfortunes. Commiserated by friends, and adversaries, on account of his untimely and deplorable fate; he is, likewise, allowed by all the historians, to have been well entitled to the eminent esteem, and regard, in which he was held by both. His equanimity, in the early and continued adversity of his fortune, was alone worthy of admiration. With the cast of strict virtue in his dispositions; he was sedate in his temper, humane, and polished in his manners, and liberal without ostentation. Naturally brave, he wanted not the qualities necessary to form a commander; but, says D'Aubigné, he considered not how requisite it was, among such troops as he conducted, to attend, personally, the execution of every important order given by him †. The King of Navarre, deeply regretting his death, caused a rigid scrutiny to be made among his domestics, some of whom were supposed to have been the perpetrators of it; though their motive, or inducement to the crime, was unknown. The Princess

Discouraged condition of the protestants. March 5. The violent death of the Prince of Condé.

His character.

of

* Thuan. lib. 90. p. 280. Matthieu, p. 542. D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 22.
† Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 304.

of Condé herſelf, upon ſome ſuſpicions, was alſo taken into cuſtody. From the circumſtance of her confinement, in the time of her pregnancy, and of the continuation of the proceſs againſt her, long after her delivery, on the firſt of September; a falſe opinion was embraced by the vulgar, and hardly afterwards departed from, that the young Prince of Condé was born thirteen months after his father's death. Though the Princeſs was acquitted from the accuſation againſt her; the ſtory of an amorous intrigue, which might be fancifully embelliſhed, was eaſily credited by the populace; who are, commonly, entertained with the recital of the misfortunes, or of the crimes, of thoſe in high rank.

False report about the birth of his ſon.

Fortunate it proved for the proteſtants, under ſuch diſadvantages, that the Duke of Guiſe, and his partizans, carried their views, at this time, more to the aſſaulting of the throne, than to the accompliſhment of their demolition. While Henry ſpoke loudly of proſecuting the war againſt them to extremity; it was found that the feuel of ſedition, ſecretly cheriſhed by the zealous party, was ready to break forth, in the capital of the kingdom *. Ever ſince the laſt year's conſpiracy, which the King, though acquainted of it, had not repreſſed; the mutinous ſpirit of the council of ſixteen had been continued. Satires, libels, and lampoons, againſt Henry, and his favourites, had been publiſhed without number. Stuffed with popular ſlanders, and ſcurrilities, which the genius of the times favoured; the rude epigrams, and the hiſſing ſonnets, fed the malignity of the populace of Paris, and other towns; who ſeemed to themſelves to breathe more the ſpirit of liberty, by the licentious, and inſolent abuſe of the court, and the government. In the pulpits, while the Duke of Guiſe was proclaimed the *Gideon*, the *Jeptha*, and the *David*, who had ſlain his ten thouſand *Philiſtines*; the King was

Virulent libels, and ſatires, by the diſaffected.

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 23. Thuan. lib. 90. p. 277.

Book II. 1588.

was mentioned, at beſt, but as *Saul* among the people. The doctors of the Sorbonne, alſo, emitted incendiary tenets, about dethroning of unworthy Princes. In the frequent riots that enſued, the Duke of Eſpernon, marked out as the object of the popular hatred, was once, and again, aſſaulted by the mob *. His removal from court was now conſidered by the Duke of Guiſe, as a point of the utmoſt importance, leſt his circumſpection, and his hardy ſpirit, might be effectual to defeat the deſigns carried on by his partizans, in the city. Beſides inſiſting upon this, among his other requiſitions from Henry; it appears, that the enterpriſes begun by the Duke of Aumale, upon ſome towns of Picardy, were intended, not only to diſtract the forces of the King, but to draw this chieftain, who was appointed governor of the contiguous province of Normandy, from the capital, and the preſence of Henry, to his poſt in that quarter. His abſence, accordingly, may be reckoned one reaſon why ſo little vigour was ſhown by the court, in checking the firſt appearances of the enſuing inſurrection of the Pariſians.

Treaſonable plots of the Pariſians.

The conſpiracy of the Pariſian incendiaries, manifeſt from various tumults in the city, was conducted in a ſhape, ſimilar to their treaſonable machinations, formerly mentioned †. Though more forward to ſhake off the reſtraints of fear, and to proſecute their purpoſes of making themſelves maſters of the city, and of the Louvre; the ringleaders ſtill heſitated about the execution of the hazardous deſign. Not quite aſſured of the ſtrength, or the courage of the confuſed and changeable populace, they varied their ſcheme from that of a general inſurrection, into the leſs perilous one of taking the King by ſurpriſe, when engaged in ſome of the religious proceſſions. In the mean time, Henry, informed by Poulain of their plots againſt his perſon, kept on his guard. From ſome threats he

* Mem. de la ligue, p. 309. Matthieu, p. 543. † Thuan. lib. 90. p. 281.

he uſed to the Preſident Neuille, one of their partizans, and from an order for tranſporting a quantity of arms into the arſenal, they apprehended a diſcovery was made; which ſoon threw them into conſternation *. This was the time, in which a ſmall exertion of authority and ſpirit, on Henry's part, would have been ſufficient to have quelled this more tumultuous, than potent conſpiracy of the Pariſian league. But, always failing to act in the proper ſeaſon, and ſeldom maſter of his own reſolutions, he allowed the arguments, uſed by ſome of his timid counſellors, about the danger of exaſperating the populace, to prevail with him †. He, therefore, only determined, to order the Swiſs regiments to be in readineſs to march towards Paris; and to forbid the Duke of Guiſe, by ſpecial command, to approach the city, at that time.

1588. April 22.

The Duke of Guiſe's correſpondence with the Pariſian confederates being well known, and his intention to aſſiſt them being alſo apparent from his coming from Lorain to Soiſſons; Bellievre bore the King's meſſage to him, to remain there, or not to appear in Paris. But the Duke, artfully, prevailed with Bellievre, to carry back his anſwer, conditionally ſubmiſſive to the King's order, and to promiſe to return to him within three days ‡. Being detained by Henry, on ſome accidental buſineſs, for the firſt day; a letter was ſent to the Duke, aſſuring him of the King's having agreed to his requeſt, and that he would come, at the end of the time mentioned, to ratify the accommodation. Bellievre's preſence at court being ſtill neceſſary; another diſpatch was ſent to the Duke, deſiring him to wait his return to Soiſſons, for a longer ſpace. By a negligence and diſorder, not uncommon in Henry's affairs, the courier being refuſed five and twenty crowns, at the exchequer, had committed both this diſpatch and the former to the ordinary poſt.

Henry's order to the Duke of Guiſe, not to come to Paris.

* Satyre Menippé, tom. 1. p. 132.
† Matthieu, ibid. p. 543.
‡ Matthieu, ibid. Thuan. ibid.

Book II. 1588.

poſt. From this circumſtance, the Duke, who probably received both theſe letters, perceived, that he might deny, without being properly contradicted, the delivery of them to him; and that he could plead his uncertainty about the King's order for his ſtaying longer than three days at Soiſſons. With this pretext, he reſolved to act that part to which his daring ſpirit had long prompted him; and to give, by his perſonal appearance, that encouragement and aid to the Pariſians, which they ardently ſolicited, and which their fears of the King's vengeance, upon the advancement of the Swiſs troops, ſeemed to require.

May 9.

Arrival of the Duke in Paris.

Accompanied with only eight gentlemen on horſeback, the Duke of Guiſe entered Paris, upon the memorable ninth of May; and rode directly to the Queen-mother's hotel in the city. While ſhe appeared to receive him with courteſy; the ſurpriſe and confuſion ſhe felt upon his appearance, could not be concealed by her *. A meſſage being preſently ſent to the King, to inform him of the Duke's arrival; and his permiſſion obtained to conduct him to the Louvre; Catherine ſet out in her chair, and the Duke proceeded by the ſide of it, on foot, and uncovered, towards the palace. The news of this proceſſion being quickly divulged; the populace, from all quarters, flocked into the ſtreets leading to the Louvre, to behold the Duke; whoſe preſence they ſo much wiſhed and longed for, at this criſis. At the ſight of him; the loud and joyful acclamations of the multitude began to be reſounded every where, as upon occaſion of a public triumph: *Long live Henry, Duke of Guiſe, pillar of the church, and ſaviour of Paris.* Some of the populace were ſeen to throw themſelves into poſtures of adoration; and others, who got near the Duke, touched his garments, as they would have done thoſe of a canonical ſaint. The applauding ſhouts elevating his

* Thuan. lib. 90. ibid. Satyre Menip. tom. 2. p. 85

1588.

his majeſtic air, while his look, now and then, ſeemed to repreſs the extravagant joy of the multitude; he advanced ſlowly to the gate of the palace. Before it, and in the lobby, an unuſual number of guards, and of gentlemen of the houſhold, was ranged. With a mien ſtill undiſturbed, he paſſed through this ſilent parade, and was carried into Queen Louiſe's chamber *. Unprepared for this emergency, and perplexed between indignation and prudent counſel, Henry was at a loſs to determine what was to be done. What high reſentment of the Duke's diſobedience and preſumption is ſaid to have dictated to him, and to ſome of his counſellors; the more cool, and deliberate among them, oppoſed. The Abbot del Bene pronounced, in Latin, the ſcriptural ſentence; *I will ſmite the ſhepherd, and the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered;* but, as the King's procurator and Villequiers argued againſt him; the firſt moments, in which violent reſolution is moſt eaſily embraced, were loſt; and the impulſe of Henry's rage ſubſided. When he came into the Queen's chamber, he ſtill ſhowed the remainder of it; by his reſentful challenge of the Duke, for diſobeying his command. In reply to it, Guiſe, poſitively, and with ſome execrations, denied his having received the letters written to him by Bellievre. After ſome altercation about this point; the Duke, upon the firſt pauſe of the diſcourſe, made his obeiſance to the King, and withdrew; ſenſible, now, of the imminent danger to which his temerity had expoſed him. His conduct was condemned by many, as too raſh, and headlong †. Sixtus Quintus, when the narrative was given him, about the Duke preſenting himſelf in the palace, exclaimed, before he heard the ſequel; Oh! the fool hardy, and infatuated Duke! The unexpected iſſue being then told him; he ſubjoined, with like ſurpriſe; Ah! the weak and daſtardly King!

His reception at the Louvre.

The

* Matthieu, ibid.

† Thuan. ibid. p. 288.

Book II.
1588.

The anxiety viſible in the faces of the collected multitude, during the Duke's ſtay in the Louvre, was again changed into tranſports of joy, upon his return from it. Relieved from terror, and animated by his preſence; the demagogues held conſultations about arming the people, to reſiſt any chaſtiſement of their former inſolence, that might be attempted by the court. In this inflamed ſtate of things *, Henry, ſtill flexible, held a long conference with the Duke the next day; and, in teſtimony of his moderation, offered to execute an order he had publiſhed, for obliging all ſtrangers to quit the city, by the interpoſition of the magiſtrates, and their guards, alone; without other military force. But, diſtruſt and confuſion being ſtill intermingled with the interviews of the parties, which were continued for two days; the King, apprehenſive of being over-reached by the Duke in a conteſt, ſo intereſting to his authority in Paris, and irritated afreſh by ſome haughty propoſals made by him, commanded the Marſhal Byron to conduct the Swiſs, without more delay, into the city.

May 12. Entry of the Swiſs into Paris.

Having entered Paris by break of day, three thouſand Swiſs, joined by two regiments of French foot, and ſome companies of the King's guards, drew up in different bodies, and in ſeveral ſtations, upon the bridges and ſquares of the city. Thoſe poſts were not ſo well choſen, or ſo extenſive as they might have been. The great place of Maubert being left open to the concourſe of the citizens; they began to croud thither with their arms. An alarm being publiſhed, that the city was beſet with foreign troops, and that many of the beſt catholicks among them were to be put to death; the populace ruſhed together, from all quarters. While conſternation and diſorder viſibly prevailed among them; it was propoſed by the brave Grillon, to drive them directly from their only place

* Ibid.

place of rendezvous *. But this being oppoſed by Villiquier, governor of Paris, who, together with d'O, directed the procedure of the King's troops; the conſequence, inevitable in ſuch caſes, enſued. The officers and ſoldiers, unactive, and motionleſs in their ſtations, were diſcouraged; while, by ſeveral parleys held with them, the populace were rendered more audacious. The latter, ignorant of what was to be done for their defence, were directed in the requiſite operation, by the Count de Briſſac. Animated † againſt Henry, who had ſaid of him, that he was not to be reckoned upon as an officer, either by land or water; he declared, it was proper for him to ſhow, what he could do *upon the pavement*. Having ordered hogſheads and caſks to be collected, and to be filled with earth, and propt with loggs of wood upon one another; rough curtains of defence were formed around the place of Maubert. In a ſhort time, all the ſtreets, left free to the operations of the city militia, were lined with them. Extended, with ſurpriſing induſtry, ſo as to encompaſs the different ſtations of the King's troops, or to intercept their communication with each other; theſe *barricades* were planted with men in arms, and ſtrengthened by iron chains ſtretched along them ‡. While the battlements of the populace were ſuffered to advance in this manner, the Swiſs troops, and French guards, having no orders to aſſail them, were obſerved to behold, with ſtern contempt, both their antagoniſts, and their military works; which, at firſt, they could have eaſily prevented, or overthrown. But now, the intercourſe of their poſts being cut off, and the multitude regularly armed, and advantageouſly placed to aſſault them; both the officers and ſoldiers were made ſenſible, that, to fight, or to retire, would be equally dangerous to them; and that their deſtruction could be ſoon effectuated by that populace, who, a few hours before, had heard their drums with conſternation.

The barricades.

When,

* Ibid. Thuan. D'Avila, liv. 9.

† D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 23.

‡ Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 318.

BOOK II. 1588.

When, by mid-day, the ſuperiority of the Pariſians over the King's troops, became inconteſtible; the Queen-mother was ſent forth from the Louvre, to hold a conference with the Duke of Guiſe. After vindicating himſelf to her from all concern in the inſurrection; he proceeded to reſtrain the hoſtile rage of the city-militia; which was actually exerted againſt a party of the Swiſs *. Appearing in the ſtreets, with only his ſword girt about him; the triumphant multitude ſaluted him with reiterated acclamations. His ſupplication to them, in behalf of the ſeveral corps of officers and ſoldiers, who remained in their power, was effectual for the releaſe of the latter. With their heads uncovered, and their arms lowered, in acknowledgement of the victory gained over them, the French guards were firſt allowed to paſs towards the Louvre; and, ſoon after them, the parties of the Swiſs, which had been attacked, and diſarmed, were alſo diſmiſſed; and had their arms reſtored to them.

The King's ſoldiers liberated by the Duke of Guiſe.

The following night was paſſed at the Louvre, in the moſt anxious conſultation and diſmay, among the King's counſellors. Whether to conclude, that the commotion of the ſcene would be ſtopt, by the Duke of Guiſe acting with the moderation he had ſhown; or, whether the unexpected triumph he had obtained, might not induce him to comply with the treaſonable projects of the Pariſian league; was an ambiguity, too difficult for the moſt penetrating judgement †. From the refuſal of the watchword, in the King's name, by the city-guards; and, from the information given to Henry of what paſſed at the Hotel de Guiſe; the greater defection of the citizens, from all principles of loyalty and reverence to him, was to be ſuſpected. Even the intelligence communicated by ſome, of the reſolution being taken to inveſt the Louvre, ſeemed, next day, to be con-

Suſpicions of the Duke's deſign to inveſt the Louvre.

* Thuan. † Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 319.

1588.

confirmed ; as larger bodies of militia were formed, and the monaſtery of the Franciſcans was turned into a place of arms. When the Queen-mother returned to another conference with the Duke of Guiſe, ſhe found him leſs obſequious in his tone, and, apparently, more averſe to pacific counſels, than he had been the preceeding day. It was time that ſome reſolution ſhould be taken, at the Louvre, about the King's ſafety ; which, from various circumſtances, appeared to be already too much hazarded *. Upon this warning from Queen Catherine, Henry imparted his deſign of quitting Paris to a few of his confidents. Having all along preſerved the ſhew of compoſure, he executed his purpoſe, without any ſuſpicion of it. Dreſſed, as uſual, he went out, as to his evening walk, by the Porteneuve, to the gardens of the Tuilleries ; at the back gate of which, ſome attendants, with horſes, ſtood ready to receive him. As he rode off from Paris, he is ſaid to have often turned his eyes back upon it, and to have expreſſed his indignation at the ingratitude of the citizens to him ; who had always reſided among them, and enriched them more than all his predeceſſors had done. Having reached Trapes, he ſpent the night there ; and, next day, made his entrance into the town of Chartres ; where ſurpriſe, and joy, at his retreat, was equally teſtified by the people. Scarcely, during the convulſions of the feudal times, had an inſtance been ſeen of a King of France being forced to quit his capital. But ſuch a phaenomenon, in the confirmed ſtate of the monarchy, was accounted a fatality no leſs ſtrange in itſelf, than ominous to the kingdom.

Henry privately quits Paris.

The explication of the Duke of Guiſe's conduct, and intentions, in the famous ſcene of the *barricades*, may be ranked among the obſcurities of hiſtory ; which the bold, and the opinionative, rather than the wiſe, pretend to unfold. By reſtraining the fury of the popu-

* Matthieu, p. 548.

BOOK II. 1588.

When, by mid-day, the ſuperiority of the Pariſians over the King's troops, became inconteſtible; the Queen-mother was ſent forth from the Louvre, to hold a conference with the Duke of Guiſe. After vindicating himſelf to her from all concern in the inſurrection; he proceeded to reſtrain the hoſtile rage of the city-militia; which was actually exerted againſt a party of the Swiſs *. Appearing in the ſtreets, with only his ſword girt about him; the triumphant multitude ſaluted him with reiterated acclamations. His ſupplication to them, in behalf of the ſeveral corps of officers and ſoldiers, who remained in their power, was effectual for the releaſe of the latter. With their heads uncovered, and their arms lowered, in acknowledgement of the victory gained over them, the French guards were firſt allowed to paſs towards the Louvre; and, ſoon after them, the parties of the Swiſs, which had been attacked, and diſarmed, were alſo diſmiſſed; and had their arms reſtored to them.

The King's ſoldiers liberated by the Duke of Guiſe.

The following night was paſſed at the Louvre, in the moſt anxious conſultation and diſmay, among the King's counſellors. Whether to conclude, that the commotion of the ſcene would be ſtopt, by the Duke of Guiſe acting with the moderation he had ſhown; or, whether the unexpected triumph he had obtained, might not induce him to comply with the treaſonable projects of the Pariſian league; was an ambiguity, too difficult for the moſt penetrating judgement †. From the refuſal of the watchword, in the King's name, by the city-guards; and, from the information given to Henry of what paſſed at the Hotel de Guiſe; the greater defection of the citizens, from all principles of loyalty and reverence to him, was to be ſuſpected. Even the intelligence communicated by ſome, of the reſolution being taken to inveſt the Louvre, ſeemed, next day, to be con-

Suſpicions of the Duke's deſign to inveſt the Louvre.

* Thuan. † Mem. de la ligue, ibid. p. 319.

1588.

confirmed ; as larger bodies of militia were formed, and the monaſtery of the Franciſcans was turned into a place of arms. When the Queen-mother returned to another conference with the Duke of Guiſe, ſhe found him leſs obſequious in his tone, and, apparently, more averſe to pacific counſels, than he had been the preceeding day. It was time that ſome reſolution ſhould be taken, at the Louvre, about the King's ſafety ; which, from various circumſtances, appeared to be already too much hazarded *. Upon this warning from Queen Catherine, Henry imparted his deſign of quitting Paris to a few of his confidents. Having all along preſerved the ſhew of compoſure, he executed his purpoſe, without any ſuſpicion of it. Dreſſed, as uſual, he went out, as to his evening walk, by the Porteneuve, to the gardens of the Tuilleries ; at the back gate of which, ſome attendants, with horſes, ſtood ready to receive him. As he rode off from Paris, he is ſaid to have often turned his eyes back upon it, and to have expreſſed his indignation at the ingratitude of the citizens to him ; who had always reſided among them, and enriched them more than all his predeceſſors had done. Having reached Trapes, he ſpent the night there ; and, next day, made his entrance into the town of Chartres ; where ſurpriſe, and joy, at his retreat, was equally teſtified by the people. Scarcely, during the convulſions of the feudal times, had an inſtance been ſeen of a King of France being forced to quit his capital. But ſuch a phaenomenon, in the confirmed ſtate of the monarchy, was accounted a fatality no leſs ſtrange in itſelf, than ominous to the kingdom.

Henry privately quits Paris.

The explication of the Duke of Guiſe's conduct, and intentions, in the famous ſcene of the *barricades*, may be ranked among the obſcurities of hiſtory ; which the bold, and the opinionative, rather than the wiſe, pretend to unfold. By reſtraining the fury of the popu-

* Matthieu, p. 548.

BOOK II.

1588.

The Duke of Guiſe's claim not eaſily aſcertained.

populace, diſengaging the King's troops, and returning the Swiſs their arms; it would ſeem, that he meant to ſave appearances with the court; and, therefore, could have no intention to invade the Louvre*. Yet, in a billet ſent next day to the governor of Orleans, to advertiſe him to march up with ſpeed, he wrote, "I keep the Louvre ſo cloſely beſet, that I ſhall be able to give a full account of all that are within it." That he might have, thus, inveſted the palace, and prevented Henry's retreat, appears unqueſtionable. He, afterwards, made it part of his apology, that it was eaſy for him to have done ſo. But the ſurpriſe, and ſenſible diſappointment teſtified by him, before the Queen-mother, upon the King's eſcape, will bear the conſtruction, that, either he had not been ſufficiently attentive, or, that he was undetermined, with reſpect to this meaſure. His conduct, upon the whole, may, perhaps, be beſt accounted for, from his irreſolution; and, upon the ſuppoſition that, daring, and deciſive as the Duke was, upon all other occaſions, the unexpected, and ſudden tide of his ſucceſs, in the barricades, found him unprepared, and unready to employ it. What the Duke of Parma, his friend, and admirer, ſaid upon this event, favours this opinion. "It muſt be owned, ſaid he, that the Duke of Guiſe has been hurried to attempt too much, and has performed too little. For he muſt have known, that when the ſword is drawn, by any one, againſt his lawful prince, the ſcabbard ſhould be thrown away." If the Duke of Guiſe failed in the practice of this maxim; how may ambition, in weaker minds, dread, in a ſimilar extremity, the dangerous and fatal ſuſpenſion of its own efforts!

The behaviour of the Earl of Stafford, the Engliſh ambaſſador, upon the day of the barricades†, is related by moſt of the hiſtorians, with much approbation of the ſenſe of honour, and of his public cha-

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 313. Matthieu, ibid. Matthieu, p. 549. Thuan. p. 287.

† Ibid. p. 322.

character, teſtified by him. The Duke of Guiſe ſignified to him, by the Count de Briſſac, that, obnoxious as he was, to the inſults of the populace, more eſpecially from a report of his having arms concealed in his houſe, he would grant him a protection: "As a private perſon, replied Stafford, I might own the obligation of this civility to the Duke; but, as the envoy of the Queen of England, in alliance with his Chriſtian Majeſty, I am not at liberty to accept of any ſafeguard, but your King's." What is done in Paris, replied Briſſac, diſconcerted, you ought to underſtand, in the proper light, as performed, by the Duke, for the King's ſervice; and ſo it ſhould be reported to your court." "It belongs not to me, to explain the Duke of Guiſe's actions, ſaid Stafford. My report muſt bear the naked narrative of what I have ſeen; that my royal miſtreſs may properly judge of it. In the mean time, I confeſs it to be my private opinion, that ſhe, and no crowned head in Europe, can view the preſent event in Paris, but as an indignity offered to all ſovereign Princes." "But you are believed to have arms ſecreted in your houſe, and may be viſited by the turbulent people, anſwered Briſſac, hoping to intimidate him." "Arms, ſuch as you ſpeak of, returned Stafford, I have none. Thoſe of an ambaſſador are juſtice, and the public faith; and with them alone I reckon myſelf ſafe. My doors, therefore, ſhall not be ſhut; but, if violence offered ſhould oblige me to bar them, in my defence; my utmoſt reſiſtence ſhall teſtify to the world, that the law of nations was moſt unworthily, but not tamely, inſulted, in my perſon." Though diſappointed at the account given him, of the reception of his meſſage, by the ambaſſador; the Duke of Guiſe, too wiſe to take offence, iſſued an order, in that ward of the city, that the Engliſh ſhould not be moleſted.

Spirited behaviour of the Engliſh ambaſſador.

The ſequel of the barricades is a piece of hiſtory, no leſs extraordinary than the event itſelf. After things were brought to ſuch an extre-

Book II. 1588.

extremity, between the King, and the Duke of Guiſe; it will ſcarcely be imagined, that the conteſt would remain undecided, and equivocal. When the ſovereign power was treated with ſo much indignity, and actually threatened with ſubverſion; it may be expected that Henry would have been rouzed to vengeance, and exerted every nerve of his royal power, to recover his degraded authority. Even the dread of ſuch revenge being meditated againſt him, may be thought ſufficient to have puſhed on the Duke of Guiſe, to begin an open war; as the only effectual meaſure for his future ſafety. But this conſequence, however naturally to be looked for, did not enſue. The King, though obliged to fly from Paris, endeavoured, in his declarations about this event, to diſguiſe the ignominy he had ſuffered; and the Duke, poſſeſſed of the metropolis, uſed various arguments to vindicate his loyalty *. In Henry's letters to the provincial governors, and magiſtrates, of the cities, the narrative of his diſhonour is expreſſed by circumlocution, and in ſuch faint terms as neither plainly marked the treaſon of the inſurgents againſt him, nor his own ſenſe and indignation of the high inſult he had ſuffered. The bold colouring the Duke of Guiſe could give to any action of his, which required to be juſtified, was diſcovered in the ſtyle of his letters. In one of them addreſſed to the King, he inſiſts, that he had performed, upon the twelfth of May, all the duty of a faithful ſervant to his Majeſty, and even ſignalized his zeal for the ſafety of his perſon, and that of the ſtate †. To his partizans, whom he deſired to encourage, he employs a different ſtyle, and gaily recites the victory obtained by him at the barricades; and, while he interſperſes ſome decent expreſſions of his loyalty, he gives them ſtrong aſſurances, that he would ſtick cloſe to his main aim, the advancement of the honour of the catholic faith, and the baniſhing of all favourers of hereſy from about the throne.

Affairs remain in a doubtful ſtate, after the barricades.

While

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 324. † Ibid. p. 314.

While the terror of the inſurrection, in Paris, damped the ſpirits of the moſt loyal; the Duke of Guiſe had, artfully, endeavoured to obtain the approbation of the counſellors of parliament, to the orders he gave, and the meaſures taken by him, for reſtoring the peace of the city*. But this ſcheme was fruſtrated, by the honourable principles, and firm integrity of the firſt Preſident, Achilles de Harlay. "By the violation of the majeſty of the ſovereign, ſaid that undaunted ſenator to him; the magiſtrate's authority is diſſolved: Legally, I can do nothing for you; and no force ſhall conſtrain me to diſhonour the character I bear, nor my function in the ſtate." But a change in the ſet of the magiſtrates, and officers of Paris, an affair of more importance, the Duke effectuated with better ſucceſs†. During the barricades, the Prevot des Marchands, in the intereſt of the King, had been thrown into the Baſtille, and other loyal Eſchevins were intimidated to act, or had fled after Henry. Upon this forced vacancy of their offices, a new election, by a general poll of the citizens, was not only demanded, but authoriſed by the Queen-mother; left, not according to the beſt policy, as Henry's ſubſtitute, for re-eſtabliſhing the peace of the city. Her compliance in this, and in other meaſures, gave the ſhew of legality to the procedure of the factious partizans; while the magiſtracy, and likewiſe, the colonels and captains of the city-wards, were modelled to their ſatisfaction. By this means, the capital was not only detatched from the King's intereſts, but the pernicious example of introducing a like change, was ſet to other cities of the kingdom. In the mean time, the Duke of Eſpernon's eſtabliſhment in Normandy, was vigorouſly oppoſed by the Duke of Aumale‡. The attempt, alſo, of this laſt chieftain, to make himſelf maſter of Boulogne, on the ſea-coſt, rendered it credible, that he acted in ſome con-

Change of the magiſtrates of Paris by the Duke of Guiſe.

* Matthieu, p. 548. Thuan. p. 289. † Ibid. 596. ‡ Mem. de ligue, p. 330.

Book II. 1588.

concert with the commanders of the famous *armada* of Spain; which, at this time, appeared in the Britiſh channel.

But it was evident, that the Duke of Guiſe was much diſconcerted in his projects, by the material circumſtance of Henry's retreat from Paris. This, alone, was ſufficient to baffle the hopes of his firmeſt adherents. It detracted, conſiderably, from the common opinion entertained by them, both of his reſolution, and capacity, in executing his purpoſes. The aſtoniſhment, and conſternation, into which people were thrown by the barricades, being ſoon over *, not only the inſolence, but the abſurdity of the inſurrection, began to be animadverted upon. As Frenchmen, who valued themſelves on the honour always paid to their King, many were aſhamed at Henry's flight from the Louvre; and the Pariſians, from conſiderations of intereſt, became ſenſible of their delirious procedure.

The Pariſians turned,

The more ſober among them thought, with regret, on the commercial loſs they would ſuſtain, from the abſence of the court, and they dreaded that Henry, ſo highly provoked, would increaſe it, by withdrawing the chambers of parliament, and other ſupreme courts, from Paris. In this change of their minds, inſtead of regarding the rebellious counſels of their incendiaries; the reſolution was taken, to implore the King's pardon, by ſending a deputation to him †.

and ſend a fantaſtic deputation to the King.

A religious one, of the Capuchin, and Flagellant, fraternities, mixed with other penitents, was thought to be the moſt ſuitable. They went forth, in fantaſtic proceſſion, forming a ſpectacle of doleful and ludicrous figures; while their repreſentation of Chriſt's paſſage to *Calvary*, ſeemed to profane the ſacred myſtery of the paſſion. The Count de Bochage crouched under the load of a heavy wooden croſs. Two of the band applied the ſcourge to his back; another ſcreemed through a horn before him; and the lugubrous cry of

* Mem. ibid. p. 313. Matthieu, p. 603. and 596. † D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 23.

of *miſerere* was echoed by the whole train. In this ſtrange parade, they entered the cathedral church of Chartres; where Henry attended the veſpers. Many of the courtiers ſmiled, while the King appeared little moved with this abſurd form of their ſupplication to him. Having *, ſoon after, received a deputation from the court of parliament, intreating him to admit, in their name, an apology for the Pariſian inſurrection; he ſignified his diſpoſition to clemency, and appointed his Maſter of requeſts to declare his will, more formally, in the great chamber of parliament.

Henry's pardon of the Pariſians,

In this alteration of the face of things, the Duke of Guiſe, having brought up, to Paris, his political tool, the Cardinal of Bourbon, began a treaty with the Queen-mother; and, as a preliminary to it, inſiſted for the removal, and diſgrace of the Duke of Eſpernon. He was reſolved †, that the favourite ſhould appear to be the main cauſe of the combuſtion that had been raiſed, by his being diſmiſſed, at this juncture, from the court. Henry's miniſters and courtiers were ſatisfied that a peace ſhould be made, at the expence of one, envied, or hated, by moſt of them; and the King himſelf ‡, attached to Eſpernon, more from habit, than warm affection, conſented, without much difficulty, to this meaſure. Having come, in haſte, from Normandy to Chartres; Eſpernon ſoon perceived, from Henry's diſpoſition to accommodate matters, and the general clamour raiſed againſt him, that his ground at court could no longer be maintained. Upon a private ſtipulation with the King, that his government of Normandy ſhould be given to none but the Duke of Monpenſier; he made a voluntary ſurrender of his commiſſion to Henry; and, quickly, took his departure for the remote provinces of Xaintonge and Angoulême. In the reply to the charge againſt him, and his brother, publiſhed a few days after he left the court; the

followed by the diſmiſſion of the Duke of Eſpernon.

 argu-

* Thuan. lib. 91. p. 297. † Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 313. ‡ Thuan. ibid. p. 305.

BOOK II. 1588.

arguments appeared to be the more forcible, as they included a vindication of the royal authority againſt the faction that invaded it, under other ſhallow pretexts, beſides that of his enjoying too high a ſhare of the King's favour. In ſuch popular controverſies, however, ſtrong colouring and invective are found to be more ſtriking, than the beſt arguments *. Eſpernon's opponents, therefore, had repreſented him, in one ſatirical piece, under the character of *Piers Gaveſton*, an odious minion, in the reign of Edward II. of England; as if their own hiſtory afforded no proper parallel to him, in the abuſes of the royal favour, and in the fate he deſerved.

Henry's facility again incroached on;

It was Henry's weakneſs, to imagine that the removal of Eſpernon, joined to his clemency to the Pariſians, would, in a great meaſure, pacify the diſcontent of his courtiers, recover his popularity, and diſſipate the intrigues, and influence of the enthuſiaſtical and ambitious partizans of the league. Upon † preſumption, that, by ſome other pacific and prudent expedients, the combuſtion lately raiſed might be entirely allayed, and the tranquility of his government re-eſtabliſhed; he appointed a number of commiſſioners, from the parliament of Paris, and other courts, to make circuits into the moſt turbulent, and diſaffected provinces. De Thou, who was one of the delegates, informs us, that they were inſtructed to confer with the leading men of the cities, and provinces, and to endeavour, by their admonitions, to remove the vulgar prejudices againſt Henry's adminiſtration, and to engage them to loyalty, and due obedience to the laws. But the hiſtorian obſerves, how vain this labour became, when it was generally underſtood, that the chiefs of the league ſtill ſtood upon terms and conditions with the King. Though ‡, from the ſtrain of the requeſt of the catholic confederates of Paris, and other cities, lately preſented to him, and ſubſcribed

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 354. † Thuan. lib. 91. p. 305. ‡ Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 345.

ſcribed by the cardinal of Bourbon, and the Duke of Guiſe, it was apparent, that they had not renounced their factious aims; Henry flattered himſelf, from the language and ſhew of loyalty uſed by them, that they might be eaſily ſatisfied, after Eſpernon's diſmiſſion. He did not allow himſelf to think, that the Duke of Guiſe's treaty with the Queen-mother, would turn out a new cartel of inſolent, and enthralling articles, like thoſe of Nancy; until the general ſketch of the demands of the chief partizans of the league was laid before him. His miniſters, though prone to make conceſſions, were ſtartled with them *. They deliberated; but, two or three excepted, none of them dared adviſe the King to break off the ſhameful treaty, and embrace the ſpirited reſolution, to defy the inſolent combination, for undermining his royal dignity †. The offers made, by the King of Navarre, to join iſſue with his Majeſty in oppoſing the relentleſs adverſaries of his crown, were heard by them with apprehenſion; and Henry, willing to rid himſelf of preſent perturbation, again committed the care of his honour, of his crown, and ſafety, to the Queen-mother; who, with the Secretary Villeroy, ſoon concluded this new accommodation.

and another ſhameful treaty yielded to by him.

The articles of agreement were reduced to the form of an edict, called that of the *catholic union* ‡, in July. The tenour of them was ſuch, that it was with ſome reaſon ſaid, that Henry could have granted little more; without totally reſigning his government to the will of the partizans of the league. The ſtipulations, with reſpect to the ſucceſſor to the crown were more poſitive and ſolemn, than in the treaties of Nemours or Nancy. The King engaged himſelf, by oath, never to favour the advancement of any Prince to the throne, who was either a heretic himſelf, or a favourer of hereſy; and his ſubjects of every order were to ſwear, not to receive, after his

July 21. The articles reduced to the form of an edict.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 603. † Mem de Sully, liv. 3. ‡ Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 368.

Book II. 1588.

his demiſe, ſuch a perſon for their King, or to yield him obedience. Other conceſſions and proviſions, of a ſimilar ſtrain, for the ſecurity of the chief confederates, were alſo ratified. The extravagance of the whole accommodation, eſpecially ſo ſoon after the barricades, and the coolneſs which Henry ſhowed in ſigning the ignominious articles at Roûen, form a preſumption, that he now premeditated the vengeful blow, ſtruck by him upon the meeting of the ſtates-general at Blois; which he had appointed to be held in Auguſt *. Several judicious, and well-informed hiſtorians, however, expreſs themſelves doubtfully upon this point; and ſome of them maintain the contrary opinion. From the enſuing narrative of Henry's conduct at the aſſembly of the ſtates taken, together with the view given of his character; it appears moſt probable, that, without being determined, at all events, to aſſaſſinate the Duke of Guiſe, he had formed the reſolution, not to ſuffer the dignity of his crown, and prerogative, to be further aſſaulted by that arrogant chieftain, under the authority of the States; and that, finding his influence with them moſt daringly exerted againſt his royalty, he was puſhed on to execute this memorable deed of revenge.

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 3. D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 3. Villeroy, cited by P. Daniel, p. 301.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Gratifications to the Duke of Guiſe and his Friends.——Aſſembly of the States at Blois.——Account of their Procedure.——Henry irritated againſt the Duke of Guiſe.——Aſſaſſination of the Duke and his Brother.——Death of Catherine de Medicis.——Her Character.

BOOK II. 1588.

WHETHER Henry perſuaded himſelf, as he formerly had done, that a coalition with the partizans of the league would reſtore his reputation with the people; or, whether he only concealed his deſign againſt their chief, by this meaſure; it appears, that he left them little or no ground to ſuſpect his ſincerity. He proceeded to perform, without delay or reſerve, the promiſes he had given of honourable preferments to the Duke of Guiſe and his friends *. A commiſſion, almoſt equal to that of Conſtable of France, was granted to the Duke himſelf. His brother, Mayenne, was ſoon placed at the head of an army, levied for the reduction of the proteſtants; and the Pope was to be ſolicited, to beſtow the office of Legate of Avignon on the Cardinal of Guiſe. He † ſo far adopted the principles of their party, as to honour the Cardinal of Bourbon like the firſt Prince of the blood; by conferring on him the privilege of creating maſters of the different crafts and arts in the cities; and allowing his domeſtics the diſtinctive immunities of thoſe of the King's houſhold. This arret, indeed, was granted in favour of the Cardinal, not as heir to the crown, but as the King's neareſt relation in blood. The diſtinction, however, was too nice to be attended to by the generality of people; and, when the enthuſiaſtical party endeavoured to revive the old controverſy, about pre-

Auguſt.

The Duke of Guiſe and his friends gratified.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 615.

† Thuan. lib. 91. p. 323.

Book II. 1588.

precedency of right in the collateral ſucceſſion; ſuch an arret by the King would be conſtructed by many, to be a preference of the Cardinal's title, to that of the King of Navarre; even upon the footing of legal right, and without regard to the religious profeſſion of the latter. But, in this manner, Henry thought it neceſſary to manifeſt his diſpoſition to fulfil the terms of his edict of Catholic union.

Imminent danger of the Duke of Eſpernon.

As in compliance with the partizans of the league, Henry, indirectly, and without intention, derogated from the King of Navarre's title to the ſucceſſion; ſo his procedure expoſed his diſmiſſed favourite, the Duke of Eſpernon, to a moſt imminent danger *. The Duke's enemies having repreſented to the King, that one, ſo haughty as he, would never endure his exile from court, without attempting ſomething in the way of reſentment; Henry, embarraſſed with the conduct of his affairs, was unwarily prevailed on to ſign an order to the commander of the caſtle of Angoulême, to admit no perſon there, who, under the pretence of authority, or by force, ſhould preſume to take poſſeſſion of it. The Duke having got admitance, ſome days before the arrival of this diſpatch, a ſpecial meſſenger was ſent back from the town, to requeſt an explication of the King's order, and to offer to expel Eſpernon. Henry ſaid to the courier, "My wiſh is, to have him diſlodged, taken priſoner, and conveyed ſafely to me." Villeroy, the ſecretary, who bore a particular ſpite againſt the Duke, hurried away the envoy with this verbal mandate. Upon the report of it to the friends of the league at Angoulême, a conſpiracy was immediately formed, under the conduct of the Conſul of the town. Every thing being prepared by him for ſurpriſing the Duke's ſoldiers in the city, he was admitted,

* Thuan. lib. 92. p. 326.

1588.

ted, together with ſome attendants, into the caſtle; and before any ſuſpicion of his deſign aroſe, within the gate of Eſpernon's lodging. A conflict, in ſeveral circumſtances, hardly credible, enſued *. With a few companions, and his domeſtic ſervants, the Duke reſiſted a numerous body of aſſailants, for thirty hours; during which time, engaged in inceſſant combats, and receiving no nouriſhment, their courage and ſtrength were exhauſted to the laſt degree. In this extremity, the appearance of ſome aid from without, conſpired with their fortitude to ſave them. Upon this ſtrange event to the Duke of Eſpernon; ſome of the hiſtorians obſerve, how much more momentuous the ever availing reſource of perſonal valour proves to a man; than all the ſupport he can drive from the precarious and changeable favour of princes.

Though Henry appeared, in this manner to model his counſels to the pleaſure of the Guiſes and their party, he could not, however, remove all their jealouſies of his cordiality with them †. His declining to comply with the ſupplications made to him, to return to his reſidence in Paris, was interpreted by them to be a mark of his ſecret reſentment. From ſenſibility, alſo, Henry could not hide his diſguſt at the letters of congratulation ſent by Sixtus Quintus to the Duke of Guiſe, and the Cardinal of Bourbon, upon the occaſion of the late edict of religious union. It was a mortification to him to find, ſtill, the teſtimonies of his zeal undervalued, or the whole merit of them aſcribed to others ‡. In ſeveral reſpects fretted and agitated; he, ſuddenly, removed from their offices, the Chancellor Chiverni, the Secretaries Villeroy and Pinart, with Bellievre, ſuperintendant of his finances. In their room, were ſubſtituted, Montholon the advocate, as keeper of the ſeals, and Ruzé and Revol, for the buſineſs of

Removal of Henry's old miniſters.

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 2. p. 525. † Matthieu, p. 616. Thuan. lib. 91. p. 321. ‡ D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 3.

Book II. 1588.

the ſignet. The hiſtorians give no other account of this meaſure; but that Henry had contracted a ſecret jealouſy, and averſion to theſe miniſters, who had ſo long witneſſed his timid conduct, and had often wrought on the flexibility of his temper, to the diſhonour of his crown and dignity.

September.

In the mean time, the convention of the States-general at Blois, prolonged to the month of October, now drew near. Having done ſo much to pleaſe the violent catholicks, and to gratify their chiefs,

Henry in hopes of gaining the deputies of the ſtates to his intereſt.

Henry had reaſon to ſuppoſe, that the latter would abate their wonted oppoſition to his authority; and that the deputies of the States, ſatisfied with his edict of catholic union, might eaſily be perſuaded to approve his propoſals to them, or be gained over to his intereſt. In the view of attaining this laſt point, it * is obſerved, that he ſet out early for Blois, and arrived there, before many of the nobles, or the generality of the deputies; and that he ordered his maſter of ceremonies to introduce the latter, one after another, into his cloſet. It is even ſaid, that, attached as many of them were to the faction of the league, he received aſſurances from the greater number, of their being devoted to his ſervice. As this conduct was unlike that of one bent on a violent purpoſe of revenge; ſo the temper he ſhowed, and the ſpeech he made upon the opening of the aſſembly of the ſtates, had nothing of this appearance. At the ſame time, along with decency and moderation †, he expreſſed himſelf with becoming dignity and ſpirit, on the ſubject of the turbulent leagues and aſſociations. He declared, that he would forgive the paſt diſorders, only upon condition of their not being repeated; and all proper ſubmiſſion being paid, for the future, to his royal authority. Upon the ſuppoſition of his acting a part, and deſiring to give no ſuſpicion of his reſentment to the Duke of Guiſe; it is moſt pro-

October 2. The opening of their aſſembly at Blois.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 627. D'Aubigné, chap. 5. Matthieu, p. 636.

† Thuan. lib. 92. p. 334.

probable that Henry, who, in ſuch matters, was minutely exact and cautious, would have ſpared this free and ſpirited declaration in his ſtudied harangue to the States. Being accompanied, in the delivery, with his majeſtical tone, the ſentence actually gave diſpleaſure, and ſome diſquiet, to the Duke and his friends. They complained of it to the Queen-mother; and employed the Archbiſhop of Lyons to intercede with the King, that the acrimonious expreſſions might be ſuppreſſed in the printed copies of his ſpeech.

It muſt be owned, that Henry's temper and diſpoſition, when conſidered, render the opinion of his having, before the meeting of the ſtates, at once reſolved to make a ſacrifice of the Duke of Guiſe, not only a doubtful, but an improbable one. Upon ſuch a ſuggeſtion of his wrath, his uſual heſitation would affect him; and, what is more honourable to his character, his habitual averſion to ſanguinary, or violent purpoſes, would ſuſpend his determination. In tracing the procedure of the States-general at Blois; we ſhall find, that he bore, for a conſiderable length of time, a continued oppoſition to his will. But the occaſions given him of kindling into vehement paſſion being frequent; and his laſt reſource, for reſtraining the power of a dangerous faction, by the authority of the States, proving ineffectual; he was, in the end, rouſed to ſtrike the blow of vengeance.

October 18. Edict of catholic union confirmed.

After the opening of the States, and the choice of the ſpeakers for each of the three orders; the firſt motion related to the confirmation of the edict of union, and the paſſing it into a fundamental and irrevocable law of the kingdom *. Having already engaged to promote this meaſure, Henry thought it beſt to gratify the generality of the deputies, who were known to deſire it, by propoſing, himſelf, the ratifying of ſo popular an article. He accordingly

* Matthieu, p. 642.

Book II. 1588.

ly received much applauſe for it; though de Thou obſerves *, that this compliance tended more to the diſcouragement of the royaliſts, than to any other purpoſe.

Faction and debates in the aſſembly of the ſtates.

Whilſt, by a variety of propoſitions, that began to be agitated in the ſeparate chambers of the clergy, nobles, and citizens, a general diſpoſition to factious conteſt ſhewed itſelf; an unexpected piece of intelligence gave a new turn the debates of the parties. It reſpected the invaſion and conqueſt of the Marquiſate of Saluſſes, by the Duke of Savoy. It is unneceſſary to trace the motives of this weak Prince, for turning an aggreſſor upon France, by an aſſault ſo unjuſtifiable and inſolent †. His youth, his vanity from his marriage with a daughter of Spain, his views of the diſtractions of the kingdom; and, either the actual correſpondence he had with the Duke of Guiſe, or the hopes of managing a treaty with him; are the general reaſons aſſigned for his conduct. The reflections, both of the court and of the States, being turned upon this event, which appeared ſo great a brand on the honour of the kingdom; warm expoſtulations aroſe, and mutual reproaches enſued about the cauſe of it, between the oppoſite parties of the loyaliſts, and the votaries of the league. The latter exclaimed, that it was ſurely a court-plot, or one hatched by the favourers of the Hugonots, in order to fruſtrate the execution of the edict of union againſt them, and to turn the arms of the ſtate, from their chaſtizement, to that of a contemptible, and leſs pernicious enemy ‡. The former replied, that deplorable, truly, was the rage of domeſtic faction and diſcord, when it overpowered the ſenſe of a national diſgrace, and obſtructed the immediate reparation of it; and that, without the connivance of the Guiſes, the impotent Savoyard would never have dared the invaſion

* Lib. 72. p. 344. † Thuan. ibid. D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 25.
‡ Matthieu, p. 655.

vaſion of the leaſt diſtrict of the kingdom. This laſt allegation began to obtain credit with many. The nobles, always the ſpirited defenders of the honour of the ſtate, inſiſted ſtrenuouſly for a declaration of war. The King's friends, and agents, in the aſſembly, ſupported their argument; while the two other orders, having a biaſs to the league, diſſented from it. But the Duke of Guiſe, perceiving his reputation was likely to ſuffer in this queſtion, and remarkable for his dexterity in every ſtrait, made a merit of his inducing the clergy and the commons to agree, in opinion, with the nobility. Yet, in the concluſion he brought them to, he artfully gained his main point; ſince it was underſtood, that, though war with the Duke of Savoy ſhould be declared, the hoſtilities againſt the King of Navarre and the Hugonots, were not to be interrupted. The King finding himſelf outdone in this affair, by the political artifice of the Duke, and by his influence, as a maſter of the ſuffrages of the ſtates, was penetrated with indignation and reſentment. Being, with ſome reaſon, perſuaded, that the carrying the diſtinct motion, for a foreign war, would have cut ſhort the factious propoſals and debates, meditated by the partizans of the league; the diſappointment, and the affront went the deeper into his breaſt.

Novemb. 16. Propoſals of the factious to exclude the King of Navarre from the ſucceſſion.

The next motion, fabricated by the antagoniſts of the royal authority, reſpected the poſitive excluſion of the King of Navarre, and thoſe Princes of the blood who adhered to him, from all claim to the inheritance of the crown. The general clauſe, inſerted in the edict of union, relative to the ſucceſſion, not ſatisfying thoſe fanatical tools of ambition; they inſiſted for an act of the ſtates, expreſsly abbrogating the apparent ſucceſſor's title. Nothing could more evince the confidence the Guiſes had of their ſuperior ſway in the aſſembly of the ſtates, than their puſhing the determination of this intereſting point. The manner in which it was carried in the States, ſhowed, that they underſtood the ground upon which

BOOK II. 1588.

which they went. The * more violent eccleſiaſtics exclaimed, that, in an affair, connected with the ſafety of religion, the judgement of their order alone ought to be heard. The commons, who generally followed their tone, admitted the authoritative argument; and the nobles choſe rather to be paſſive, than engage in the diſpute. The condemnatory decree againſt the King of Navarre, was paſſed, almoſt without a conteſt; and a deputation of the ſtates was ſent to deſire the King's confirmation of it. Henry was now ſenſible, what diſmal conſequences might enſue from this infraction of the order of ſucceſſion, and how it would involve the kingdom in bloodſhed; and might expoſe himſelf more to the rage of a faction. He delayed his aſſent, without venturing to refuſe it †. The King of Navarre furniſhed him with ſome arguments, in a well-penned requeſt to him, for inſtruction in the diſputable points of faith, by a convocation of the clergy. Henry inſiſted with the ſtates, that fundamental juſtice, and the credit of their procedure before the world, required, that the preſumptive heir ſhould be ſummoned, before condemnation, or that ſome delegates ſhould be ſent from them, to admoniſh him of his errors. The clergy pronounced this unneceſſary, to one already adjudged contumacious. Finding his will contradicted, and his inability, either to direct, or ſuſpend this decree of the ſtates; the King, with apparent acquieſcence, evaded the actual ratification of it; and began to loſe all hopes of the diſpoſition of the deputies to peace, or loyal counſels.

December 2. A debate about the ſubſidies.

What was further attempted, and in part accompliſhed, by the violent faction, with reſpect to the public ſupplies, and the finances, was, no leſs, a flagrant proof of their purpoſe to diſtreſs the King, and diſable his adminiſtration. Though a foreign war was reſolved upon, and a domeſtic one actually waged; it was decided,

* Mem. de la ligue, tom 3. p. 141. Matthieu, p. 656. † D'Aubigné, chap. 8.

1588.

ded, that two millions of crowns ſhould be cut off from the ſtanding ſubſidies. Henry conſented to this meaſure, for the ſake of its popularity. But what followed it was, ſtill, a bolder effort to perplex, or unhinge, the government of the ſtates*. A decree paſſed, to reduce the number of the general receivers, and collectors of the revenues, from ten, to two, in every dioceſe. It was a ſhock, which the government, in its preſent circumſtances, could, by no means, bear; and it was, evidently, intended as a political ſtroke of the Guiſes, to annihilate the intereſt of all thoſe people, who depended for their fortunes on the crown. By the ſuffrages of the ſtates, without a proper deliberation on the conſequences of the meaſure, the odious financiers were at once to be cancelled; and their fate appeared inevitable, as Henry interpoſed not to protect them. But the ſucceſsful reſiſtence they made, to the authority of the three orders of the kingdom, which he attempted not, is a remarkable piece of hiſtory. Having aſſembled together, in the monaſtery of St Francis, to the number of three hundred; they marched in a body, to the aſſembly of the ſtates, with Scaevola, a learned and eſteemed civilian, at their head. When not permitted to plead their cauſe, by argument, they betook themſelves to a much more daring vindication. They inſiſted, that, undue influence being uſed in the election of many of the deputies, the aſſembly of the ſtates was irregularly conſtituted, and that they had a legal title to proteſt againſt its deciſions. Upon this high indignity offered to them, the deputies carried their complaints to the King. The financiers were reprimanded by him, but not in ſuch a manner as to diſcourage them. They offered to prove their allegations before his Majeſty; both by verbal, and written evidence. The ſingular controverſy would have been carried to a high pitch; but the King, and the Duke of Guiſe, were too much occupied with other intereſting queſtions,

Singular ſtruggle by the financiers.

* Thuan. lib. 93. p. 260.

BOOK II. 1588.

queſtions, to engage warmly in it. The financiers were allowed to eſcape; while, it was obſerved, that the objection ſtarted by them might have been urged by Henry, as a plauſible one, for diſſolving the turbulent ſtates. It may be added, that it was of ſuch a delicate nature, that, in governments ſupported upon conſtitutional freedom, it can hardly ever be inſiſted upon, without laying their root bare, to the ſtroke of ſovereign power.

The often exploded diſpute, about the reception of the decrees of the council of Trent, was now introduced; and a ſelect committee of the clergy, and officers of the crown, being appointed to deliberate upon it; ſome of the latter were treated with much inſolence, by the eccleſiaſtics. In every appearance Henry's miniſters made to ſupport the dignity of the crown, they found themſelves, either baffled, or affronted *. They began to wear that demure aſpect, natural to men in office; when made ſenſible of the inſignificancy of their rank. The Marſhal D'Aumont, remarkable for probity of character, and plain honeſty of ſpeech, could not help expreſſing the ſenſe he had of this, before the King: "We are, ſurely, Sire, ſaid he, the moſt diſgraced ſet of people that ever wore ſwords. We comply, and ſtoop, before our adverſaries, and are ſtill inſulted by them." He took occaſion to explain, more particularly, his ſentiments of the Duke of Guiſe's deſigns; which he could do with the more authority, as he had been earneſtly ſollicited by that chieftain, to join himſelf to the league. He concluded with informing Henry, that he was aſſured, it was the ſcheme of the Duke's partizans, to conſummate his power, by getting him declared conſtable of France, by a decree of the ſtates †. Others acquainted the King with the ignominious ſpeeches uttered by the more violent, and profligate, of the party, with reſpect to his perſon, and government: That

Henry's miniſters treated with diſdain.

* D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 13. † Matthieu, p. 654.

1588.

That they publiſhed the preſent year to be the *climacterical*, and finiſhing one of his reign; and that now, before he reached his third crown, in heaven, that of the *tonſure* among the monks awaited him." The Dutcheſs of Monpenſier, Guiſe's ſiſter, enraged againſt Henry, for ſome ſarcaſms upon her perſon, as well as politically diſtracted, had often ſhown a pair of golden ſciſſars, which, ſhe ſaid, were kept at her girdle, to begin the operation upon his head.

From various other circumſtances, reported by the hiſtorians, it appears evident that Henry, inſtead of diſcloſing, at laſt, a premeditated purpoſe of vengeance, required cloſe and new inſtigations to his reſentment; which, according to occurrences, aroſe, and ſubſided, by fits *. Moſt of them affirm, that he was admoniſhed by the Duke of Mayenne, and others, of his family, to beware of Guiſe's unwarrantable projects, from his influence in the aſſembly of the ſtates. Some of them mention theſe warnings, as importing deſigns againſt his perſon. But D'Aubigné declares, that the reports of this kind, were raiſed and propagated by the King's friends; and, that the complaints, which the Duke of Mayenne, and others of his kindred, were known to make, againſt the Duke of Guiſe, for his haughty and commanding manner with them, might give ſome colour and credit to ſuch aſſertions. With all theſe motives and inducements to animoſity and revenge, Henry became uncommonly moroſe and ſullen †. Want of ſleep, a late diſtemper of his conſtitution, ſeized him, which increaſed with the intenſe cold of the ſeaſon. The Chancellor Chiverni, who knew its effect upon his ſpirits, ſaid to the Preſident de Thou, "The Duke of Guiſe will do well to take care how he goes on to irritate the King, in this great inclemency of the winter: He will, otherwiſe, run the

Other provocations received by Henry;

who becomes highly incenſed.

Decemb. 18.

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 144. Matthieu, p. 661. D'Aubigné, ibid.

† Thuan. lib 96. p. 460.

BOOK II. 1588.

hazard of being diſpatched within four walls; for, added he, in ſuch exceſſive cold as this, the King's temper may, eaſily, be provoked to a degree of fury."

In conſultation with a few; he determines to diſpatch the Duke of Guiſe.

Under ſenſible agitation of ſpirit, Henry now called, to a private audience, the Marſhal d'Aumont, de Rambouillet, and Beauvais-Nangis, as the only perſons he could truſt with the ſecret of his reſentment; and made a pathetic recital to them, of the many indignities he had ſuffered from the Duke of Guiſe. He required them to tell him, what was to be done with ſo inſolent a ſubject, who degraded his authority, in the ſight of all France *. They aſked a ſhort ſpace of time to deliberate by themſelves; and ſoon returning into his preſence, they all declared that the Duke ought to be treated as one guilty of high treaſon. But, in conſidering how they ſhould proceed againſt him, the Marſhal d'Aumont propoſed, that he ſhould be arreſted, together with all of his family that were at Blois, and be brought to a capital trial. Though a regard to the King's honour, a ſenſe of public juſtice, and a fear of the conſequences of a more irregular, and violent reſolution, recommended this opinion; it appeared to labour under ſtrong objections. Beſides the difficulty of arreſting him, it could not be ſaid, with certainty, that there was any city, or province in France, where he could be kept in cuſtody. The principal forces, then on foot, being under the command of his brother the Duke of Mayenne, he could not even be conducted, with ſecurity, into any diſtant place of ſtrength; and it might well be ſuppoſed, from the general connections, and great intereſt, which he and his friends had with people of all ranks in the ſtate, that no judges, ordinary, or, particularly commiſſioned, would dare pronounce ſentence againſt him †. It was, therefore, determined, that his death ſhould be procured in the ſu-

reſt

* Thuan. lib. 93. p. 366. D'Avila, liv. 9. † Matthieu, p. 663.

reſt and ſpeedieſt way, and by any means. "Such an audacious and powerful criminal, ſaid they, cannot be dealt with according to the ſtated forms of juſtice. It is enough, that the King judges him to have forfeited his life, by repeated acts of treaſon." The ſcruple, about violating the King's oath of protection to the ſtates, was likewiſe overcome. To the objection from the public reſentment, and commotion his death might occaſion, it was replied, that the chief pillar being removed, the fabric of the league itſelf would fall to the ground. Laſtly, with reſpect to the Pope's ſuppoſed diſpleaſure with ſuch a deed, Henry was put in mind, that Sixtus had wrote to his legate, Moroſini, after the barricades, that the King would be in the right, if he ſhowed himſelf, at all hazards, maſter of his kingdom, at the aſſembly of the ſtates.

Animated with the approbation of his confidents, Henry reſolutely ſought to accompliſh the Duke of Guiſe's deſtruction. But an aſſault on his perſon was not eaſily executed. Always ſurrounded with his friends and attendants, this chieftain, as he himſelf boaſted, went ſo well accompanied to the very door of the King's chamber *, that he had no reaſon to be apprehenſive. It was believed, that the report of this intimation of his ſecurity, directed the contrivance of the time and place of aſſaulting him. Though the nobility carried their retinue to the door of the preſence-chamber, there was a ſmall difference upon a council-day. The King's guards were then placed at the entry of the hall, and the train of the nobles remained, behind them upon the ſtairs, or in the lobby. From this circumſtance, it was apparent, that the Duke could be found ſeparated from his attendants; and might, without ſuſpicion, be called out of the council, into the King's cloſet. It only remained, that ſome perſons ſhould be pitched upon, by the King, bold and reſolute enough, to perpetrate the bloody revenge.

Contrivance to execute this purpoſe.

 Deſirous

* Thuan. ibid.

Book II.
1588.

Grillon refuſes to be employed by Henry.

Deſirous that one of the moſt tried, and invincible reſolution, might conduct the execution of the deſign; Henry firſt applied to Grillon, camp-maſter of his guards. There was no more truſty, nor undaunted ſoldier than he. But, extremely ſenſible to honour, this proud veteran made little ceremony in declining the employment. "Devoted as I am, ſaid he, to your Majeſty's ſervice, you know *, Sire, I make profeſſion of being a ſoldier, and a gentleman: That of an executioner is unſuitable to it: But command me to challenge the Duke of Guiſe, and you ſhall find that my weapon, and my life, are conſigned to your royal order." Henry, though diſappointed, took no offence; but required of Grillon to ſwear the oath of ſecreſy. He then addreſſed himſelf to Loignac, one of the gentlemen of his bed-chamber; who, without ſcruple, engaged, along with ſome of the band of the forty-five penſioners, to perform his Majeſty's pleaſure. A Captain of the guards, L'Archant, alſo, undertook to act a part in the plot, by preſenting a petition to the Duke, when he came into the council.

As, in the greateſt circumſpection of the unfortunate, ſome circumſtance that expoſes them, is often overlooked; ſo, in the plots, managed by the moſt wary and artificial, ſome unaccountable ſurmiſes, and confuſed alarms, about them, are frequently propagated. The realizing of the laſt obſervation, as well as of the firſt, in the caſe of the Duke of Guiſe, was not ſurpriſing. When the loyaliſts found the leaders of faction inſolently perſiſt in their oppoſition, they would naturally uſe ſome threats of the King's reſentment; with which ſome of the more timorous, among the latter, would be alarmed. Hence ſuſpicions early aroſe, and rumours were ſpread about Henry's violent purpoſes, during the aſſembly of the ſtates †. At this time, they increaſed ſo much, that almoſt every one of the Duke's intimate friends were affected

* Ibid. Thuan. D'Avila.

† Thuan. p. 372.

fected with them. He was adviſed by his brother, the Cardinal of Guiſe, to conſult his ſafety, by withdrawing from Blois; and the Preſident Neuillé, after importuning him to this purpoſe, ſhed tears for his uncomplying temerity. "My ſituation and the King's, replied the Duke, may be compared to that of two armies in the field, facing each other, in order of battle. The one cannot retire without giving an apparent victory to the other." The Archbiſhop of Lyons was the only one of his friends who encouraged him in this obſtinacy. The day before the fatal one, he is reported to have found a billet in his table-napkin, intimating the King's reſolution to deſtroy him. He wrote on the back of it, "He dares not," and threw it under the table.

Duke of Guiſe contemns the warning given him.

From the band of the forty-five; nine, judged moſt apt for the ſecret and bloody enterpriſe, were ſelected, by Henry. The council being fixed by him for the twenty-third, and appointed to meet in the morning; he is ſaid to have called the aſſociates of his vengeance, with privacy, and, at a very early hour, into his cloſet, and to have addreſſed them in the following manner: "My laſt reſort for the puniſhment of the Duke of Guiſe, as an inſolent traitor, is, this day, placed in your reſolute hearts and hands. I am confident you will revenge the many wrongs of your Sovereign. Take then, thoſe daggers, which I have provided for you, to rid me, and my kingdom, of one, too powerful to be tried by the forms of juſtice." He then led them to their ſtation, in the narrow paſſage from the council-room to his cloſet; and withdrew himſelf into a more remote apartment.

The ordinary members of the council, expecting the ratification of various public acts and decrees, by the King, previous to the feſtival of Chriſtmas, repaired to the hall, before day-light. The Duke of Guiſe was the lateſt of them who appeared. He had been followed by l'Ar- Decemb. 23.

Book II. 1588.

l'Archant to the great gate; who, attended with his company of guards, without arms, preſented him with a petition for their arrears; and formed a line in the ſtair-caſe, by way of doing him honour. When the Duke paſſed; all the crowd of his followers, and thoſe of the other nobles, were required by them, not to diſturb the council, but to retire into the court-yard *. An accident happened to the Duke of Guiſe, as ſoon as he had taken his ſeat in the council. He, ſuddenly, turned pale, trembled all over his body, and blood trickled from his noſe. Having a handkerchief, which he called for, given him, with ſome ſweetmeats, by one of the King's pages; he drew near the fire, and ſoon recovered from his diſorder; which ſeveral of the hiſtorians repreſent as the effect of fear. Revol, the King's ſecretary, who knew nothing of the plot, was ſent into the council-room, to acquaint the Duke, that his Majeſty called for him in his cloſet. He roſe immediately, with a recollected countenance; and, having made obeiſance, with his uſual politeneſs, to the members of the council, he went out, by the inward door; which was preſently ſhut behind him. He paſſed along the entry to the cloſet; and having ſtooped down a little, to lift up the hangings over the low door of it; St Malin, one of the nine aſſaſſins, waiting for him, ſtarted foreward, and, laying his left hand on the Duke's ſword, he, with the other, ſtruck his dagger into the lower part of his neck. The wound, given with advantage, filled his jaws with blood; and, inſtead of articulate ſounds, he could only emit a deep and heavy groan. By others throwing themſelves upon him, thus diſabled; he was hindered from unſheathing his ſword. Though mortally wounded by them in ſeveral parts of his body; he is ſaid to have exerted ſo much ſtrength, as to extricate himſelf from their hands. Erect in his poſture, and his arms raiſed, he endeavoured to fall upon Loignac; but one puſh of a ſword, un-

Circumſtances which attended the Duke's aſſaſſination.

His death.

* Ibid. Thuan. D'Aubigné, chap. 4.

1588.

undrawn, ſtretched him on the floor; where, without viſible agony, he quickly expired.

In anxious conſternation, at the noiſe heard, after the Duke quitted the council-room; the Cardinal of Guiſe, and the Archbiſhop of Lyons ſtarted from their ſeats; and flew each of them to a different door. But l'Archant's company of guards appeared at the outward one; and the Marſhals d'Aumont, and de Retz, riſing immediately, declared, they were both of them his Majeſty's priſoners; and that every thing was done by the King's command *. They were led to confinement, in an upper room, in the caſtle; the Primate's grief equalling that of the Cardinal, for the Duke's fatal exit; to which he conſidered himſelf as acceſſary, by the advice he had given. At the ſame time; Henry's orders for placing guards on the Cardinal of Bourbon, and for ſeizing the perſons of the Dukes of Elboeuf and Neamours, were executed. The Duke of Guiſe's ſon, together with his ſecretary, was likewiſe arreſted. In the town-hall, the Preſident Neuille, the Prevôt des marchands of Paris, and other partizans of the league, were ſuddenly apprehended; and ſo general, among the diſaffected party, was the aſtoniſhment at the Duke of Guiſe's fate, that few of them had preſence of mind to fly, and none of them attempted the leaſt reſiſtence.

The Cardinal of Guiſe, and the Primate of Lyons ſeized.

The Duke's dead body being covered with a piece of tapiſtry, and removed out of the paſſage to the King's cloſet; the door of it was opened; and Henry himſelf appeared. As the Lords entered from the hall; he ſaid aloud, to the Cardinal of Vendôme; "It is now, that I am King. Let all ſuch, as would ſubvert my authority, learn from this day's act, what they may expect †. My reſolution is ſtill, to wage war with the Hugonots; tho' the incendiaries of

Henry expreſſes his triumph on Guiſe's death.

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 152.

† D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 14.

Book II. 1588.

of the league have loſt the power of compelling me." As he expreſſed himſelf, in a ſimilar ſtrain, to the Queen-mother, who was not admitted to the ſecret of the aſſaſſination; ſhe, ſick in bed, could only ſay; "Have you provided againſt the conſequences of this action? Have you made ſure of the diſaffected cities?" I have uſed all neceſſary precaution, replied Henry. But a little time ſhowed, that he ſtill fell ſhort in acting his part.

In proceeding to determine the fate of the prelates in cuſtody; Henry ſhowed himſelf moved by his private hatred of them both, and by his peculiar reſentment againſt the Cardinal of Guiſe. Tho' obnoxious, as well as the Duke of Guiſe; the general reverence of their order, and the Pope's concern in their ſentence, was an obvious and weighty argument, in policy, againſt involving them in his puniſhment *. But the Cardinal's virulent ſpeeches, and epigrams, againſt the King, being now rehearſed by his enemies, together with the paſſionate and menacing language uttered by him, when taken priſoner; Henry made little heſitation, in iſſuing the order for his death. In ſhedding the blood of a prelate, none of the forty-five would be concerned. Du Gaſt, a captain of the guards, got four ſoldiers bribed to diſpatch him, with their halberds. Upon this ſacrifice to his reſentment, which ſhould have been ſpared; Henry's ſanguinary impulſe ſtopt. To the intreaty of the Count de Lux, he granted the Archbiſhop's life; and, his natural diſpoſition to lenity ſoon returning, he extended the ſame pardon to all the priſoners. It being, with reaſon, ſuſpected, that the dead bodies of the two brothers, might be made objects of the popular ſuperſtition; they were carefully concealed from public view. Being conſumed, as was believed, in quick-lime; and their bones being reduced to aſhes; every relict of them was annihilated.

Cardinal of Guiſe diſpatched.

In

* Matthieu, liv. 6. p. 669.

1589.

In contemplating the ſignal character, and cataſtrophe of Henry Duke of Guiſe; we behold an example, unparallelled in that age, of private ambition, long and ſucceſsfully maintained, in oppoſition to the legitimate ſovereign of a great monarchy. He underſtood, and, with much political ability, improved the opportunity he had to interrupt the regular tranſmiſſion of the crown; and, beſides preventing the King of Navarre's advancement to it, to have cauſed a revolution, even in the lifetime of Henry III. Too much preſumption, with reſpect to this Prince's weakneſs and timidity, a miſtake which need not appear ſurpriſing, proved his political error, and his ruin. So narrow and ſlippery is the tract of ambition, that one ſmall overſight confounds all the meaſures of its ableſt votaries! By effectuating the Duke's death in ſuch a manner, Henry III. ſhowed the impotence of his authority, and that, having, by his own remiſs, and faulty adminiſtration, degraded it, he could not attempt the vindication of his royalty, but by an action which diſhonoured himſelf. Though the Duke of Guiſe, by a courſe of treaſon, had made a forfeiture of his life to the ſtate *; yet mankind, in a civilized age, and in a nation that cheriſhed the principle of honour, could not acquit the injured Sovereign from blame; when, inſtead of acting with the martial ſpirit which became him, he deſcended to a puſillanimous breach of faith, and contrived to ſtrike his adverſary, like an aſſaſſin.

January 5. Death of the Queen-mother.

Another memorable event, which enſued in the court of France, was the death of Catherine de Medicis, the Queen-mother. "You have led us all to the butchery," ſaid the Cardinal of Bourbon to her, a little before ſhe died. He underſtood not, how the plots of the court, or of the oppoſite faction, were conducted; but he believed, with many others, that Catherine had an active hand in every ſcene of artifice and revenge. In the eſtimate of ſo uncommon a character

Her character.

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 14.

BOOK II. 1589.

ter, it is no wonder that the hiſtorians ſhould diſagree. A real prodigy of her ſex, for political abilities; ſhe appeared capable of compoſing, or over-ruling the commotions of the kingdom. With the luſt of power, predominant in all her aims, ſhe increaſed the public diſcord. Never weary of the exerciſe of her artificial genius, nor of the civil broils which diſplayed it, ſhe deſired, no more than the moſt turbulent chieftains, to live in tranquility. In a ſtate, ſo full of diſtraction, perhaps no other woman, who was not a Sovereign, ever acted ſo important a part, for ſuch a length of time. Her ſons were indebted to her, much more than the crown, or ſtate of France. In no other character, were vigorous paſſions more amazingly combined, with the faculty of diſſimulation *. Her love of pleaſure and gallantry, was almoſt equal to her turn for political affairs. Magnificent and profuſe; ſhe left behind her ſeveral pieces of coſtly building unfiniſhed. Her perſon and addreſs, were majeſtic; and ſhe commanded reſpect and attention, by a maſculine elocution. When Henry IV. complained, that he could not, with all his attention, eſtabliſh the ſame ſhew of magnificence and order in the entertainments of the court, which he had formerly ſeen; he was told, "It was, becauſe his Majeſty could not raiſe up the Queen-mother." Being lately in leſs confidence with Henry, her death occaſioned no alteration in his meaſures.

By the blow he had ſtruck, Henry preſumed that the commotions of the ſtate would ſoon be calmed; and that, to reſtore public tranquility, it was only neceſſary for him, to act with clemency and mildneſs *. By ſetting at liberty the Count de Briſſac, and others, in confinement; the deputies of the ſtates were encouraged to proceed in their deliberations. Their ſpeakers delivered their orations

* Thuan. lib. 94. p. 385. † D'Aubigné, ibid.

rations in the uſual form; and prepared their memorials of the public grievances. But, the daily intelligence brought of inſurrections in ſeveral cities and provinces; and the wrath of Sixtus Quintus, threatened by his legate, for the murder of a Cardinal, ſhowed, that a new, and dangerous combuſtion was ready to break out in the kingdom.

CHAP. VI.

Reconciliation with the Duke of Mayenne tried by Henry.—Outrages of the Pariſians againſt his Authority.—Expulſion of the Counſellors of the Parliament, at Paris.—Inſtitution of that of the League.—Confirmation of the Duke of Mayenne's Authority, in the Council of the League.—Revolt of many Cities.—Henry's Retreat to Tours.—His Treaty, and Interview with the King of Navarre.

BOOK II.

1589. January.

NEXT to being determined, in all critical affairs, nothing appears more neceſſary, than to avoid acting by halves, and ſtopping ſhort in the proſecution of an important reſolution. After what Henry had done at Blois, for terrifying the diſaffected, it was political to ſupport the appearance of the provoked Sovereign, for a time; and to ſhow himſelf no more diſpoſed to parley with the inferior partizans of faction, than to ſpare the principal incendiaries. It was, perhaps, his part, not only to have threatened the leagues of the factious with juſt vengeance, but to have put himſelf in a poſture of reducing them to obedience. It was expected by many, that, whilſt terror and confuſion prevailed amongſt his adverſaries, upon the firſt intelligence of the Duke of Guiſe's death, he would have ſummoned his loyal nobility, and marched with his troops, to Paris.

Henry, inſtead of acting with reſolution, endeavours to ſooth his enemies.

Inſtead of this procedure, Henry fell again into the error, already ſo fatal to him, of applying lenitives to the cankered ſores of the ſtate, and of entering into arguments about his conduct, with a violent party; which liſtened to no reaſon, unleſs when over-awed.

He

1589.

He publiſhed a confirmation * of his edict of catholic union, to teſtify his irreconcileable averſion to the Hugonots. He allowed Compan, Cotte Blanche, and the Lieutenant of Amiens, three ſworn adherents to the Pariſian faction, to go to Paris; on their promiſing to ſmooth the minds of the people; the very reverſe of which was performed by them. While he conſumed time, in cajolling the deputies, and in finiſhing, ceremoniouſly, the aſſembly of the ſtates; Orleans, the moſt convenient citadel of war, for either party, was loſt; and all the efforts made by the Marſhal D'Aumont, were ineffectual to recover it. His ſcheme to ſurpriſe the Duke of Mayenne at Lyons, proved alſo unſucceſsful; and the eſcape of this chieftain alone counterbalanced the ſeizure he had made, of the perſons of the Cardinal of Bourbon, of the young Duke of Guiſe, and the Duke of Elboeuf, and others †. Though lodged in the caſtle of Amboiſe, du Ghaſt, to whom they were committed, was ſo treacherous, and mercenary, that Henry was forced to redeem ſome of them, by a ſum of money, out of his hands, and to allow him to retain others, for the benefit of a like bargain.

His counſellors confirm him in his timid reſolution.

For this conduct, ſo ill ſuited to his ſituation, the argument of Henry's counſellors was, that it became him now, after the ſcene at Blois, to ſhow himſelf, more than ever, tender of his reputation amongſt the catholics; and attentive to convince the zealous party of them, that he would proſecute the war againſt the Hugonots, with the utmoſt vigour. Upon this account ‡, the army he had in Poictou, they alledged, ought not to be haſtily recalled; leſt the catholic officers and ſoldiers ſhould take the alarm, and revolt againſt the ſuſpicious ſervice, to which they were ordered. Too diffident, and undetermined, to reject the nicety, and fallacious prudence of this

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 171. † Thuan. lib. 93. p. 380. ‡ Ibid.

Book II.

1589.

He tries to engage the Duke of Mayenne to a reconciliation with him;

this advice, inſiſted on, chiefly, by the Marſhal de Retz, and conteſted by Rambouillet; Henry allowed it to have its full influence, in the management of his affairs, at this critical juncture. Amongſt other experiments, in conformity to it, he neglected not to try that of alleviating the grief and indignation of the Duke of Mayenne, by the letters he wrote to him. In them he aſſured him, that, reluctantly, conſtrained, by the treaſonable practices of his brothers, which he himſelf had once acknowledged, he had cut off the root of a moſt audacious rebellion, by their puniſhment; but that all his reſentment, and wrath, againſt their family, being extinguiſhed with it, he wiſhed, and conjured the Duke of Mayenne, to act in ſuch a manner, that he might be at liberty to beſtow on him all the honours and favours, which they had long enjoyed, and now had unhappily forfeited. Againſt any impreſſion from theſe ſoothing promiſes, Mayenne was hardened, by the natural flow of his grief, by his deep ſenſe of the violent injury, and by what, he knew, his honour and fame required of him, in ſo atrocious and flagrant a caſe, as that of the perfidious murder of his brothers *. It is ſaid, that the official of the Archbiſhop of Lyons held a conference with him; in which he endeavoured to perſuade him, by a variety of arguments, to hearken, in this criſis of his future fortune, to the dictates of reaſon and duty, rather than be ſwayed by paſſion and revenge; and, ſince the fate of the kingdom depended on his preſent reſolutions, to prefer, by a noble ſenſibility to patriotiſm, the good of all France, to the conſideration of the honour of his family. The Duke was, in reality, placed in this ſituation, equally intereſting to himſelf, and to the kingdom. His character was ſuch, that he may well be ſuppoſed to have balanced in his mind, the motives he had to peace or war with his Sovereign. But what, on a ſimilar occaſion, would have moved, and determined, a Roman, or a Grecian,

but without effect.

in

* Matthieu, lib. 8. p. 631.

in pious regard to the common wealth; could not be expected to have influence, ſufficient to over-rule the determinations of one, bred up in the Gothic ſentiments of honour, and duty. His family, and relations, loudly, called him to revenge the blood of their chief; and become, at once, the reſtorer of their dignity, and the champion of the catholic cauſe *. The letters of his ſiſter, the Dutcheſs of Monpenſier, penned with the virulence natural to her, urged the ſtrong inducements, which the impulſe of juſt vengeance, and the general bent of the Pariſians to a revolt, furniſhed him with; to put himſelf at the head of the catholic league. Not ſuffered to deliberate long, he, quickly, took his rout to Dijon, in Burgundy, of which he was governor; and, from thence, began to iſſue commiſſions to his partizans, for levying troops, and ſecuring the cities, and caſtles, in his intereſt.

The impreſſion made on the Pariſians, by the firſt intelligence of the Duke of Guiſe's violent death, ſhowed that fear is moſt predominant, and contagious, in a multitude. For the firſt day, aſtoniſhment, confuſion, and deſponding lamentations, were chiefly perceptible, in all quarters of the city. Even † the preachers, on the feſtival of Chriſtmas, expreſſed themſelves more in plaintive dirges, than in the tone of indignation. Some of them animadverted on the imprudence of the deed done by the King, without condemning the injuſtice of it. Gradually, this gloomy dejection abated. The Duke of Aumale was called, from his devotions in the ſuburbs, and, in a tumultuous aſſembly of the burgeſſes, declared governor of the city. As the Duke of Nemours, with other refugees from Blois, arrived in it, and the King's faithleſs mediators of peace ſoon followed them, the conſternation ceaſed; and preſumption, inſolence, and rage, ſucceeded to it. The preachers contended with one another,

At firſt thrown into aſtoniſhment,

the Pariſians reſume their indignation at Henry;

in

* Thuan. p. 380. Matthieu, ibid.

† Thuan. p. 381.

Book II.

1589. And proceed to various outrages.

in blowing up the imaginations of the people, by the moſt profuſe eulogiums on the aſſaſſinated Duke, and the moſt infamous invectives againſt the King. In one audience, it was aſked from the pulpit, If there was no catholic amongſt them, zealous enough, to take perſonal revenge of the tyrant? In another, the congregation were required to lift up their hands *, in ſolemn teſtimony of their reſolution, before God, and his ſaints, to proſecute, to the utmoſt, the murderers of the two Chriſtian heroes. "I will not, ſaid one of thoſe devout incendiaries, preach to you, on the goſpel of this preſent Lent, as it is common, and known to every one, but my ſubject ſhall be, the life, behaviour, and deteſtable actions, of the perfidious tyrant, Henry *de Valois*." The populace, inflamed by their ſpiritual guides, were thrown into extaſies of rage †. They tore in pieces a fine picture of Henry, in the habit of his order, that hung in the chapel of the Auguſtine friars. His name, and arms, wherever they appeared, were defaced. In ranſacking his oratory ‡, in the convent of the Hieronymites, at Vincennes, where many curious pieces of painting and ſculpture were collected, the figures of two ſatyrs, nicely engraved, and varniſhed, were found; which being ſhown to ſome prieſts, were declared by them, to be the idol daemons he worſhipped; and exhibited, as ſuch, in the churches, before the credulous multitude. From the impoſitions of the clergy, thus aiding the malevolent enthuſiaſm of the vulgar, perhaps no prince's name and character were ever treated with greater abuſe, and infamy. Beſides numberleſs libels, and lampoons, in which he was traduced, as a hypocrite, a heretical traitor of the church, and an execrable magician; the gallery of his palace was overſpread, with portraits of him, in horrid poſtures, and invironed with groups of devils.

From

* Satyre Menippée, tom. 2. p. 444. and 345. † Ibid. p. 319. ‡ Thuan. lib. 94. p. 397. Matthieu, p. 695.

From the conſultation of the theological faculty of the Sorbonne, upon the lawfulneſs of ſupporting the catholic church, againſt an apoſtatizing Prince, who had violated his oath to the ſtates of the kingdom; it appeared that ſeveral of the Pariſians required to be ſatisfied, in their conſciences, about their diſpenſing with their ſworn allegiance to their King. In different countries, and ſtates, men have, occaſionally, contented themſelves with different ſolutions of this delicate point. By appealing it, to an eſteemed council of conſcience, the deciſion became eaſy and ſhort *. A college of ſeventy doctors, pronounced, that the people of the kingdom were freed from the obligation of their oath of fidelity to Henry III.; and that they might, lawfully, take arms for the defence and preſervation of the catholic, and apoſtolic church, in oppoſition to him. This determination was a triumph to the council of the ſixteen; and juſtified, in the eyes of many, their uſurpation of ſupreme authority in the city. Yet ſtill, as in all governments, regularly conſtituted, there are ſeveral ſubordinate checks to violence, the factious found, in the court of parliament, a conſiderable obſtacle to their outrageous procedure. To ſubvert its conſtitutional juriſdiction, and diſqualify its members, from acting in their ſphere; there appeared to be but one way; which was that of direct violence; by their excluſion from the court, and the arreſting their perſons. Senſible, however, that the apparent exiſtence of the chambers of parliament was deſireable, and knowing that ſome of the counſellors were of their party, and and others might be conſtrained, or converted to be ſo; they propoſed, at firſt, to ſeize ſuch a number of the obnoxious ſenators, in their houſes, as might be agreed upon among them †.

A decree of the Sorbonne is pronounced; January 7. acquitting the people of their fealty ſworn to the King; which being oppoſed by the parliament,

But Buſſi le-Clerc; one, whoſe impudent exertion of his mean and profligate talents rendered an oracle, among the ſixteen; inſiſted that the ſcheme could be more ſurely and dexterouſly accompliſhed, by arreſting

the counſellors are violently expelled. January 16.

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 182. Menip. tom. 2. p. 103.

† Thuan. ibid. p. 392. Satire

Book II. 1589.

arreſting them in the aſſembly of the court itſelf. His advice being approved, and the execution of it committed to him; this creature of ſedition, whoſe higheſt advancement in life had been his profeſſion of a procurator, armed his band of mutineers, and led them to the gates of the parliament-hall. Having beſet all the doors and paſſages, he entered, with ſome attendants, into the grand-chamber; where the counſellors were conveened to deliberate about ſending a deputation of their body to the King. He ſaid, that he was commiſſioned to requeſt them, to conform their arrets to the decree of the Sorbonne; and to unite themſelves with the good catholics of Paris. But retiring, for a moment, to the door; he appeared again with a piſtol in his hand, and pulled out a liſt of thoſe whom, he ſaid, in a ludicrous tone, he was ſorry to be obliged to take into cuſtody. When he read out the name of the firſt Preſident, Achilles de Harlay; the other Preſidents, and all the counſellors, aroſe from their ſeats, and declared, "That he need name no more of them, ſince they were all ready to follow their head, where-ever he might be conducted." The ſanctuary of public juſtice was, immediately, evacuated by the whole body of ſenators, who, being above fifty in number, formed themſelves into a long line, hemmed in by Buſſy's band of militia. The ſpectacle of the moſt venerable court of law in Europe, thus expelled from its function, and the aſpect of a number of its members, eminent for their worth, probity, and knowledge, expoſed to indignity, and violence, were ſtriking, and deplorable; even in the ſight of the abuſed populace. Confounded, and at a loſs how to explain this phaenomenon; many of them were obſerved to look at their judges, led captive in their robes, with tears*; and, in various places, as they paſſed along, the ſhops and booths being ſhut up; they ran tumultuouſly to arms. Only ſome of the dregs of the multitude, who hoped for the plunder of houſes,

* Thuan. Ibid.

houſes, appeared to be unmoved; and to join in the outrage. To quell the growing commotion of the people, the preachers were directed to aſcend their pulpits; and emiſſaries were ſent forth, by the ſixteen aſſociates, to ſpread intelligence of a deſign to betray the city to the heretical party. Fated, always, to be the dupes of their ignorance, and of impoſition; they were reſtrained from interpoſing, while Buſſy led off the miniſters of juſtice, and lodged them priſoners in the Baſtile.

1589.

From the promiſcuous tribe of the counſellors, advocates, and clerks of the parliament; a new body was formed; which aſſumed the name and functions of the ſupreme court of juſtice. The leaven of the catholic league had diffuſed itſelf, through all the orders of men in the ſtate. Fear, and ſelfiſh conſiderations, made others ſubmit, to act a part, in this eſtabliſhment, procreated by anarchy. To incorporate the new parliament with the league; was the primary care of the ſixteen guardians of Paris *; which was immediately done, by the approbation and general ſignature of a decree among the conſtituents; never to recede from their catholic confederacy; and to proſecute, vengefully, the death of the Duke of Guiſe, and the Cardinal, his brother, againſt all, that were either the perpetrators, or accomplices in it. The Duke d'Aumale, as governor of Paris, having aſſociated with him, a council, called that of *the union*, conſiſting of forty perſons, proceeded to iſſue various decrees, in their name, reſpecting the civil adminiſtration; and, particularly, one for the abolition of a fourth part of the tailles; which, though importing no greater reduction of them, than what the King had granted, at the requeſt of the ſtates, proved of conſiderable influence in intoxicating the minds of the people in the provinces; and defeating the effect of Henry's arrets, againſt the Dukes of Mayenne and Aumale,

January 30. A court of parliament of the league is inſtituted;

and a council, called that of the union,

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 179. and 177.

Book II. 1589.

and the rebellion of the Pariſians. After this confirmation of the power of the league, and the accounts that were daily brought of the acceſſion of many cities and towns to their party; no bounds were ſet to the outrageous inſults of the latter, on their Sovereign's name and authority. That the inſanity of the Pariſians in their revolt, and the ignominious compliance of many with it, who had been members of the legal magiſtracy, might be exemplified in the moſt ſingular and ſcandalous form, and mark what would be hardly credible to poſterity; not only were the deſerts of the King, and the civil penalties he had incurred, inſiſted on in the libels, and opprobrious pieces publiſhed againſt him; but a formal impeachment of him was admitted, and commenced before the parliament. The document of this ſtrange proceſs had been, for a long time, ſuppreſſed; and the fact itſelf being only mentioned by ſome hiſtorians, on report, was not believed, or called in queſtion; till a copy of it was found out, and printed, about the time Mr Bayle publiſhed his dictionary. Though the extract of the regiſter of parliament it contained, was only ſo far compleat, and extended not to the final ſentence of the court; it was accounted, as may well be imagined, a moſt incomparable relict of the ſpirit of the league. As ſuch, it is inſerted in the remarks on the *Satyre Menippée* *, a collection of facts, relative to the league and its votaries; no leſs entertaining to the curious, than that burleſque performance, ſo much celebrated. The memorial of it is to this purpoſe: "It was the requeſt in judgement, before the parliament, at the inſtance of Catherine of Cleves, dowager of Guiſe, and with the concurrence of the deputies of the kingdom, that Henry of Valois being arraigned, and convicted of the murder of the Duke of Guiſe and of the Cardinal, ſhould be condemned to make the *amende honorable*, ſtript to his ſhirt, with his head and feet naked, a cord about his neck, and, with the aſſiſtance of the executioner, hold-

Upon this change, a formal proſecution is commenced gainſt Henry;

who is condemned to forfeit his crown.

* Tom. 2. p. 295.

holding in his hand a lighted torch, of thirty pound weight; and that, having confeſſed his guilt, he ſhould aſk pardon on his knees; be declared unworthy of the crown of France, and fallen from all right to it; and, for his further diſgrace, that he ſhould be baniſhed, and confined for life, to the convent of the Hieronomites, near the caſtle of Vincennes. The court appointed the trial of the cauſe to proceed; and two intermediate arrets with reſpect to it, were ſubjoined."

1589.

February 12.

The Duke of Mayenne is adored by the populace of Paris.

After thoſe unparalleled ſignals of the open revolt of the Pariſians; the Duke of Mayenne arrived in the city, amidſt the joyful acclamations of the people; loudeſt, often, when the body politic is thrown into a violent convulſion, and ſome dangerous revolution is near. In ſuch emergencies; their precipitant tranſition, from one extreme to another, is always diſcoverable. While they mangled every effigy of Henry's royalty; the Duke of Mayenne was painted with the diadem on his head. His moderation and prudence, however, ſuffered him not to be tranſported with the homage paid him by the giddy multitude. Cautious, and diffident rather about embarking on the unſtable bottom of a popular faction; he endeavoured to provide againſt the internal diſtractions, to which it is ever liable; and alſo to ſecure his own authority, and the efficacy of public ordinances, againſt the juſtly dreaded domination, and impetuous zeal of the ſixteen *. For effectuating this; the ſupreme and almoſt regal power, with which he was inveſted, under the title of *Lieutenant-general* of the ſtate, and crown of France, joined to that exerciſed by *the council of the union*; appeared to be well calculated. To detach the latter more, from the influence of the ſixteen, he artfully contrived, to get an addition made to their number of ſeveral perſons, eminent for their abilities, and rank in the ſtate, who

* Thuan. ibid. 397. Matthieu, liv. 8. p. 724.

Book II.
1589.

who were named by him; and even ordered matters ſo, that the ſeveral deputies of the provinces, and all the biſhops, and princes of the general league of the kingdom, were declared, when preſent, aſſiſtant members of the Pariſian council of union. The formality of his admiſſion to his high office, by a decree of the court of parliament, under an oath, to defend and maintain the catholic religion, together with the privileges of the three orders, the laws and conſtitutions of the kingdom, and the authority of the chambers of juſtice, had a manifeſt tendency to controul private ambition, and overawe popular anarchy; until the aſſembly of the ſtates-general ſhould be conveened, upon the fifteenth of July; to which all ordinances were referred, for their final ratification. Upon this eſtabliſhment of the Duke of Mayenne's authority, and the face of general order given to the ſyſtem of faction; various decrees and regulations, reſpecting the confiſcation of the eſtates of heretics, and ſuch as ſhould refuſe to embrace the party of the league, with other political ſtatutes, were iſſued in his name, and that of the council of union; the diſobedience, or contempt of whoſe acts of ſovereignty, was declared puniſhable with death. The Duke, now found the utmoſt encouragement to exert himſelf, in ſpiriting up the inſurrection of the other cities, and extending the flame of diſcord over the kingdom.

February 17. His authority is confirmed, in the council of union.

What paſſed in Paris proved, unhappily, for Henry, an incentive to the rebellion of the partizans of the league, in a number of cities; where ſimilar marks of violent antipathy, to his perſon and government, were diſplayed. Roüen, Lyons, Toulouſe, Marſeilles, Aix, Arles, Poictiers, Bourges, with a variety of towns, in the more central provinces of the kingdom, ſoon followed the example of the metropolis. At firſt, Henry, affecting to deſpiſe the tumultuous commotion, or, to diſſemble his apprehenſion of its danger, ſaid; "It is only a pack of cards, blown down by a puff of wind." But he

Revolt of the cities to the league more general.

he poſſeſſed not that compoſure of ſpirit, in the view of preſent ſtraits, which this manner of ſpeaking expreſſed. Apt rather, from his natural complexion, to be overtaken with fits of chagrin; he was ſeized with a dyſentery, which, being the diſtemper of his conſtitution, was violently increaſed by the diſquiet and vexation of of mind, that affected him at this juncture *. De Thou was introduced to his chamber, when he laboured under this double paroxyſm of pain and grief. His ſituation, indeed, was ſuch, that no ordinary ſhare of fortitude could ſupport the diſtreſſes of it. To the ſhocking inſtances of ungrateful treachery, which the deſertion of many governors of places, ſingularly indebted to him, afforded; was ſtill joined the ſtumbling timidity, and diſagreement of ſome of the courtiers; about the manner of oppoſing the declared enemies of his crown; and, to this latter circumſtance, was added his own apprehenſion of the fulminations of Sixtus Quintus againſt him. He had endeavoured to mitigate the wrath of the ſovereign pontiff, by the moſt early tranſmiſſion of his inſtructions to the Marquis of Piſani, and the Cardinal of Joyeuſe, his ambaſſadors at Rome. To appear the more ſubmiſſive, and, on the preſumption of gaining his point by it; he departed from a plea he had, with ſome ſhew of reaſon, made uſe of at firſt; about his being abſolved, for what had been done at Blois, in conſequence of a brief obtained by him, the year before, from the Pope. D'Angennes, Biſhop of Mans, had been diſpatched by him, with a ſpecial order, to requeſt his abſolution in pure grace of his Holineſs; and this prelate, accordingly, intreated it, with the proſtration of himſelf at the feet of Sixtus †. But the Pope, as it was believed, at firſt, giving way to an affected reſentment, for the aſſaſſination of a Cardinal, and refuſing to treat about pardoning the King, but in a conſiſtory of the Cardinals; inſenſibly, allowed his violent temper to get the better of his cool ſentiments

Henry's diſtreſs is augmented by the behaviour of Sixtus Quintus.

* Ibid. † Thuan. ibid. p. 370.

Book II. 1589.

timents of the affair. In the courſe of the negociation, ſome arguments uſed by Henry's envoys, about the eccleſiaſtical privileges of the King and kingdom of France, irritating Sixtus the more; he inſiſted, that, before abſolution was granted, the Cardinal of Bourbon, and the Archbiſhop of Lyons ſhould be delivered up to him. In the mean time, the magnified accounts of the ſuperior power of the league in France, and the addreſs of the Duke of Mayenne's agents, diſpoſed the Pope to ſuſpend his determination; while Henry, involved in the utmoſt perplexity and peril, found no proper reſource, either in his domeſtic councils, or in his foreign treaties, for ſuccour. When, at laſt, the reſolution was formed to recal the Duke of Nevers's army from Poictou, and oppoſe it to the league; difficulties were ſtill ſtarted by that chieftain, about conducting it to the north of the Loire; leſt the war with the proteſtants ſhould be thought to be deſerted by the King. The diſpatch of de Sancy to the Swiſs cantons, in diſguiſe, and without money, in order to procure a levy of troops, ſhowed the ſtraits and indigence to which Henry was reduced. The extremity of his affairs ſtill increaſing, he was ſoon obliged to ſeek a place of greater ſafety than Blois *; while, in the centre of his kingdom, Tours, and Beangeney, were the only other places that offered him an acceſſible retreat.

The King withdraws to Tours.

Neceſſity, of the moſt preſſing kind, and not choice, at length determined Henry, to enter into a treaty with the King of Navarre. Though Sixtus Quintus himſelf had predicted this conſequence, from the inſolent procedure of the Guiſes, and the league; and conſiderate men perceived, early, that Henry would be forced to take this meaſure †; yet, it appears, from the accounts of the hiſtorians, that it was with a mixture of reluctance, anxiety, and dread, that he proceeded to execute ſo neceſſary a reſolution. Strange, indeed,

Reſolves, not without dread,

and

* Matthieu,

* Sully mem. liv. 3. Matthieu, p. 788.

1589.

and ineligible, might the political tranſition appear, and feel to Henry; who had ſhowed conſiſtency and ſteadineſs in nothing ſo much, as in his purpoſe of reducing the proteſtants; whoſe alliance and aid now became indiſpenſibly requiſite to the preſervation of his crown. Viewed in a political light, the event itſelf might well be reckoned marvelous in a catholic kingdom; and, contemplated in a religious one, it might be accounted a providential reproof to that bigotted antipathy, and hoſtile rage, with which the proteſtants had been perſecuted in the French ſtate. That this party had ſubſiſted, under ſuch a long ſeries of conflicts, with the ſuperior power of the catholicks and the government, and was, at this juncture, capable of affording ſupport to Henry, who never favoured them; was, certainly, a matter of ſingular admiration. Their ability to perform this ſervice to the ſinking ſtate, was no leſs an honourable proof of their invincible fortitude, than their ready diſpoſition to engage in it, proved a laudable teſtimony of their loyalty and moderation being ſuperior to the reſentment of their ſufferings. That they were kept in this temper, and neither forfeited their reputation in arms, nor alienated their affections from the King, may, juſtly, be aſcribed to Henry of Navarre's continuing to act as their head and conductor; with that intrepid valour, mixed with unaffected generoſity, and circumſpection without craft, which dignified his name and character.

to enter into a defenſive treaty with the King of Navarre.

During the interval of the aſſembly of the ſtates at Blois, and the agitated ſcene of affairs that attended, and followed it; the King of Navarre, and, indeed, all the proteſtant partizans, ſeemed to be thrown out from the political and military drama; which was ſo completely occupied by the catholicks themſelves. Their diſtant enterpriſes in arms, in a corner of France; however toilſome to their ſmall and ſcattered forces, diminiſhed, for a time, the appearance of their importance, in the great ſcale of events. But the effects of

 their

Book II.

1589.

Situation and military ſucceſs of the latter prince.

their perſevering valour ſoon broke into view; when, after ſeveral other ſucceſsful ſieges of places, the King of Navarre advanced to the aſſault of Niort, in the borders of Poictou; and, by an uncommon exertion of military conduct, as well as of proweſs, carried this important garriſon by ſtorm. When, here, firſt acquainted with the aſſaſſination of the Guiſes, an event more favourable to his intereſt, than to that of any other perſon; he expreſſed himſelf with commiſeration of the fate of the Duke of Guiſe, "which yet he owned, his too great confidence had provoked." Having marched a long way, on foot, to the relief of Garnache, a place beſieged by the Duke of Nevers, a fever, occaſioned by fatigue, ſeized him on the road; and ſuſpended, for a little, the order and progreſs of his troops. But, on his ſpeedy recovery, which was followed by the receſs of Never's army; he ſhowed how well he could turn this opportunity, increaſed by the firſt confuſion of the divided catholics, to the advantage of his party. In a few weeks, Pont St Maixant, and Mailleſais; and, towards the Loire, the towns and forts of Loudun, L'Iſle-Bouchard, Mirebau, Vivonne, and Chatelleraut, were forced by him to ſurrender. It was at the taking of the laſt of theſe places *, that the Baron de Roni communicated to him intelligence of the ſecret engagement the King of France had entered into with him, about concluding a treaty, for their mutual defence. The King of Navarre received the news with diffidence; and, as he had too much reaſon, aſked, "If Henry meant, at laſt, to be ſincere with him?" We may attribute to ſpleen, more than to any juſt ground, the complaint ſtated by de Roni, in his memoirs; that, from the accident of his ſickneſs, du Pleſſis Mornay robbed him of the honour of finiſhing this agreement between the Kings †. It is evident, from ſeveral other hiſtorians, that du Pleſſis, as an able miniſter, was employed in the beginning, as well as in the

March.

* Thuan. lib. 95. p. 423.

† Memoires, liv. 3.

1589.

the concluſion of the treaty *. It bore only the name of a truce for a year, and, excepting two or three ſecret articles, it implied no more than a ſuſpenſion of arms; like that which had, lately, been agreed upon, between Alphonſo d' Ornano, the King's Lieutenant in Dauphiny, and Leſdiguieres. So apprehenſive and fearful did Henry ſtill ſhow himſelf, about the conſequence of calling the Hugonots to his aid!

For two weeks, after the articles of the treaty were ſettled, the King of France, on ſeveral pretences, interpoſed a delay †, about the delivery of his ſigned engagement to his brother of Navarre. By the agency of the Pope's nuncio Moroſini, he even tried his laſt effort, to engage the Duke of Mayenne to terminate the diſcord between them; and, for this purpoſe, propoſed a reference of the whole grounds of it to the court of Rome, and the judgment of Sixtus Quintus. Upon the refuſal of the Duke of Mayenne, to ſuſpend hoſtilities; the truce with the King of Navarre was publiſhed, in the form of an edict. From ſuch appearances of ambiguous conduct, and even of approaches to treachery, on Henry's part, a ſufficient explication of his brother's heſitation, to proceed to the firſt interview with him, may be derived. After the town of Saumur was yielded to him, for the ſecure paſſage of his troops over the Loire; this ſignal meeting of the two Kings took place, at the caſtle of Pleſſis, near the city of Tours. In his progreſs to it, being urged by ſeveral meſſengers from Henry, who was in hazard of being aſſaulted in his new quarters, by the forces of the Duke of Mayenne; the King of Navarre made a march with ſome troops, that kept him two and twenty hours, on horſeback. When arrived near the place of conference; the enterance on a ſcene, ſo new to himſelf, and his followers, occaſioned a pauſe; and a council to

April 26.

Henry's heſitation is apparent, till the time of the interview with Navarre; April 30.

* Mem de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 306. et p. 287. † Thuan. ibid. Matthieu, p. 746.

BOOK II.

1589.

be held with his chief officers. To ſome of them, mindful of the former repeated perfidies of the court, and the recent evidences of Henry's tergiverſation; the riſk of this laſt ſtep to be made, which would put their heroic leader, and themſelves, in the power of the catholicks, appeared awful and terrifying. "Can any of us be ſure, ſaid they, that a Prince, ſo averſe to us, and ſo diſtracted with his fears, will not, when he has ſuch an opportunity, purchaſe his peace, and reconciliation with the Pope, and the violent catholicks, by delivering us up as a ſacrifice to them." Du Pleſſis Mornay, and Chaſtillon, uſed their beſt arguments, to ſilence thoſe moroſe and jealous murmurers; and Henry *, ſtarting up with his uſual alacrity, cut ſhort the deliberation, by ſaying, "I have reſolved to go on; and you, my friends, will do well to think no more of the matter." By this time, the King having come forth from Tours, expected his brother-in-law, in the park of Pleſſis; whether a vaſt multitude of people had flocked to behold ſo rare a ſpectacle. For almoſt a quarter of an hour, the two Princes ſtood in view of each other, at the diſtance of not many paces, without being able to embrace, on account of the interveening crowd; who redoubled their joyful exclamations, "Long live the King, and the King of Navarre." The latter fell on his knee, before Henry; who inſtantly raiſed him up, and folded him in his arms. Their amicable interview, ſo pleaſing to the promiſcuous ſpectators, afforded yet more cordial ſatisfaction and joy, to the conſiderate well-wiſhers of their country; who, deploring the miſeries of France, ſaw no other poſſible remedy for them, but by a happy union of the King with the lawful ſucceſſor to the throne. Having retired, after the conference, to his quarters; the King of Navarre appeared, next morning, on his way to Henry's lodgings, accompanied only with a ſingle page, and was introduced to his bed-chamber. By this behaviour, he endeavour-

ſome of whoſe officers diſcover their jealouſy, previous to the ſignal congreſs of the two Kings.

* Mem. de Sully, ibid. Mem. de la ligue, p. 298.

deavoured to baniſh the diffidence of ſeveral of his officers, and ſhowed a noble oblivion of that treatment, and thoſe injuries, which had formerly provoked him to ſay, "That he would never go again into the King's cloſet; but through the line of an army, drawn up for his guard."

Previous to this public pledge of the union of Henry, and the King of Navarre; the former had publiſhed his ban and arriere-ban, for raiſing the gendarmerie of the nobles, and all the vaſſals of his crown *. The Duke of Mayenne, and his adherents, were proclaimed rebels, and ſubject to the penalties of treaſon; and, by another declaration, under his royal authority, the parliament of Paris, and all the other ſupreme courts and chambers of juſtice, and of the finances, formerly held in that city, and in ſome other revolted towns, were transferred to Tours. The ſtyle of authority in the kingdom could not be aſſumed by the other Prince; but his addreſs to the three eſtates of France, and his ſubſequent manifeſto, on his paſſing the Loire, for the King's ſervice, equalled, in ingenuity of argument, and elegant compoſition, the ſpirited and poliſhed productions of du Pleſſis Mornay; which have been mentioned, as the maſter-pieces of the writing of that time. But while, with ſuch a coadjutor in arms, as the King of Navarre; the ſchemes for Henry's defence, and the ſuppreſſion of the inſurgent leaguers, began to be ſettled, and carried on, with more alacrity and vigour; the Duke of Mayenne had meditated the ſtriking a dangerous blow; by throwing himſelf, with all the forces he had on foot, in that neighbourhood, upon the King's quarters, in the city of Tours †. D'Oiſel, an officer, eminent, no leſs for his talents in artificial negociation, and intrigues, than for thoſe of a military kind, is reckoned to have encouraged the Duke of Mayenne, to this briſk enterpriſe.

A deſign is formed, and attempted by Mayenne,

Like

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 222. et 230. et 252.

† Thuan. lib. 95. p. 46.

Book II. 1589.

Like many others, whoſe principles of loyalty the ferment of the civil wars had diſſipated, or reduced to the balance of their intereſt; he had feigned a diſobligation with Henry, for not declaring, directly, how he would employ him; and, though freed from captivity, by the King of Navarre, on condition that he ſerved Henry; he quitted Tours, with avowed diſcontent, and betook himſelf to the Duke of Mayenne's army. He had made his obſervations, with a ſoldier's eye, on the ſituation of the ſuburbs; which was liable to be attacked, from ſome declivities of the ground about it; with much more advantage, than it could be defended. This was reported by him to the catholic commander; who, alſo conſidering, what was ſuggeſted to him, about the inclination of part of the inhabitants, to favour the league, and the confuſion that yet prevailed amongſt the followers of the King's rout from Blois, and the little probability there was of the catholic and proteſtant officers acting in concert; was convinced, that ſo favourable an opportunity was not to be loſt. Deſirous of making the aſſault, while the King of Navarre was gone towards Chinon, to bring up his infantry; he made a forced march of eleven leagues, in the night, and, with the couriers of his army, reached the avenues of the ſuburbs, an hour after ſun-riſe *. The King, about the time of their arrival, had rode out, with a few attendants, to take a view of the environs of the place; and, narrowly eſcaped being ſurpriſed by them. The alarm, of the unexpected approach of the enemy, created the utmoſt confuſion in the city. Some of the moſt gallant of the King's officers and ſoldiers, led by Grillon, iſſued from the ſuburbs, to repulſe thoſe of the forlorn hope, who had poſſeſſed themſelves of the path-ways into it; but they were ſoon overpowered; and, the ſlight outworks being aſſaulted, and carried, againſt the long, but diſorderly efforts of the defenders,

to ſurpriſe Henry at Tours.

May 8.

* D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 18.

1589.

fenders, they were forced to retreat to the gate, from whence they came; in the defence and ſhutting of which, Grillon was ſeverely wounded; and ſeveral of his party loſt their lives. The intrenchments of the ſuburbs were now invaded, and maſtered by the enemy's forces, with the ſlaughter of above two hundred men, on the King's ſide; when the arrival of Chatillon, la Trimouille, and Rochefoucaut, who were ſoon followed by four proteſtant regiments, revived the courage of the blockaded catholics. Their undiſturbed looks, and ſtayed motion, in paſſing the bridge of the Loire, where they were expoſed to the cannon-ſhot, and muſquetry of the enemy, heightened the idea of their ſuccour; and their white ſcarfs, well known to their adverſaries, gave intelligence that the King of Navarre, with other diviſions of his army, was near at hand. His appearance quickly baffled all the Duke of Mayenne's hopes of ſucceſs, and obliged him to retreat, with as much hurry, as he had advanced to the enterpriſe.

Its defeat chiefly owing to the timely ſuccour and bravery of the proteſtant troops.

A relief, ſo ſeaſonably afforded to the King and court of Tours, was reckoned an auſpicious effect, and confirmation of their new alliance with the King of Navarre. Henry, an eye-witneſs of the cool intrepidity of Chatillon, and his fellow chieftains upon the bridge, declared himſelf not only ſatisfied, but charmed with their behaviour *; and, in public token of his approbation and eſteem of their valour, he put on their white ſcarf; an honour to them, which gave offence to ſuch of his courtiers as ſtill retained their ſullen averſion and prejudices; while the more liberal and generous among them, confeſſed, that his Majeſty might well engage them to act in his ſervice, as they had now done, by this honorary teſtimony of his favour. The Duke of Eſpernon's acceſſion to the court at this time,

* Ibid.

BOOK II.

1589.

Henry teſtifies his ſenſe of the ſervice performed by the proteſtants;

time, with a choice body of troops, upon a meſſage from the King, proved alſo of conſiderable advantage to the royaliſts; eſpecially as it was * attended with the reconciliation of the Marſhal d'Aumont, and other courtiers to this once ſo much hated chieftain. Their poſts, and places of action, ſo far as the deſultory revolts permitted it, were now aſſigned to the loyal commanders and nobility. To the King of Navarre, Henry, not unwillingly, committed the conduct of the main body of his forces, and the chief burden of the war. The Count of Soiſſons was ſent to command in Britanny, againſt the Duke of Mercoeur; and the Duke of Monpenſier was charged with the reduction of the power of the league, in his province of Normandy; which, by the revolt of many towns, was in danger of being over-run. To himſelf, Henry reſerved the care of diſpatching ambaſſadors to foreign courts, ſoliciting the aſſiſtance of princes in his cauſe, which ſeemed intereſting to all ſovereigns, and of managing his now more perplexed buſineſs with the court of Rome †. Not only were the Princes of Germany and Italy, and the Queen of England implored to engage in the protection of the French monarchy, but Philip II. of Spain, the known inſtigator and protector of the catholic league in France, was addreſſed, by a ſpecial embaſſy; that, as a Sovereign, in amity, and under the obligation of treaties with Henry, he might concur in extinguiſhing a rebellion of ſubjects againſt their lawful Prince; an evil which he himſelf experienced in the Netherlands. Philip knew well how to make the evaſive reply that was ſuitable to his views.

and commits the chief conduct of his army to the King of Navarre.

As a revolution in the civil wars of France now took place, that never once enſued in any former period of them; and the arangement of the King of Navarre and the proteſtants on the ſide of the crown,

* Thuan. ibid. p. 434. † Ibid. p. 439.

crown, produced a ſingular and important change in the political ſtate of the government; it becomes, not unſeaſonable, to interrupt the narrative of the domeſtic affairs of the kingdom, conſiſting wholly in military enterpriſes, and to enter on the review of the principal events that had paſſed, during four or five years, in other ſtates of Europe.

CHAP. VII.

Foreign Affairs.——Of the Netherlands.——Of England and Scotland.——Of Spain, and the Armada of Philip II.——Of the Invaſion of the Coaſt of Spain by the Engliſh.——Intereſt of the Powers of Europe in the civil Wars of France.

Book II.

1585.

Foreign affairs.

Of the Netherlands.

IN the Netherlands, the fate of the confederated ſtates, ſeemed, in a manner, to depend upon that of Antwerp; now beſieged by the Duke of Parma *. Its defence, and the attacks made upon it, proved a celebrated exhibition of the military art of thoſe times. All the contrivances, and engines of war, then known, were employed on both ſides. The moſt laborious and coſtly works were conſtructed by land and water. The reſolution of the garriſon, aided by the ſituation of the city, and the ſpirit of the inhabitants, baffled, for a long time, the efforts of the moſt experienced general of his age. But the ſurrender of Antwerp, at laſt, ſhowed, that the Duke of Parma's military ſkill, and induſtry, were equal to the greateſt undertakings; and that an impregnable fortreſs, as the city was reckoned, was only a chimerical idea.

Auguſt 17.

Dejected with this loſs, added to the death of the Prince of Orange; the ſtates at the Hague reſolved to throw themſelves again upon the protection of France or of England; and to offer the ſovereignty of their provinces to the one or the other of theſe powers †. After ſome deliberation, the preference was given to the former; notwithſtanding the late experience of the Duke of Anjou's treacherous behaviour. But, as has been mentioned, the envoys

* D'Aubigné, liv. 5. chap. 22.

† Camden's hiſtory of Eliz. b. 3. p. 318.

envoys of the ſtates, ſent to the court of France, met with ſo cold a reception from Henry, as gave them no encouragement to expect his protection. Upon turning their application to England; they were more ſucceſsful. Queen Eliſabeth, to whom the danger of a people, connected with England by their contiguous ſituation, by their religion, and their commerce, appeared intereſting, determined to engage earneſtly in their defence. Without accepting the ſovereignty offered her by the ſtates; ſhe conſented to a formal treaty with them *. By the terms of it, ſhe agreed to furniſh, during the war, and maintain, upon her own expence, a body of five thouſand foot, and a thouſand horſe. For the repayment of the money, the town of Fluſhing, the Caſtle of Rammekins, and the Brill, were to be put in her poſſeſſion. The commander of the Queen's forces, with the title and rank of Governor-general of the Provinces, was to have a ſeat, and a deliberative voice in the council of the ſtates; together with two other Engliſhmen, that he might nominate. From the general tenor of the treaty, the juſt and equitable purpoſes of the Engliſh Queen were manifeſt; and the ſtates had reaſon to conclude, that ſhe intended to act with all ſincerity and honour in it.

The Earl of Leiceſter ſent to Holland. January.

After a vindication of the Queen's offenſive league with the ſtates was publiſhed by her; the Earl of Leiceſter, her favourite, took his departure, with a retinue of Engliſh Lords, and five hundred gentlemen, for Fluſhing †. He was received by the ſtates, not only with all teſtimonies of honour, and public congratulation; but the dignity and title of Captain-general of their army and navy was voluntarily conferred upon him. In almoſt every reſpect, that ſpecies of ſovereign authority, exerciſed by the governors of the Low Countries, under Charles V. was recognized in him, as Queen E-

 lizabeth's

* Thuan. lib. 84. p. 78. † Camden, ibid.

Book II.
1586.

lizabeth's delegate. Upon intelligence received at the Engliſh court of this procedure of the ſtates; the Queen, highly offended with them, and with Leiceſter, required that his commiſſion, which exceeded the articles of the treaty with her, ſhould be recalled. Upon this point, it was certain, that Elizabeth uſed no diſſimulation, nor ſhowed an affected nicety of conduct. Jealous of her honour, as to public ſtipulations, and valuing herſelf on the wiſdom and ſteadineſs of her counſels, ſhe would ſuffer no blemiſh on the one, nor any raſh and preſumptuous variation to be made in the other. The apology of the ſtates, that the condition of their affairs required the management of a ſingle perſon, joined with Leiceſter's ſubmiſſive reply, hardly ſufficed to appeaſe her indignation.

Before entering upon the military hiſtory, it is proper to obſerve, that the ſtates of the union, which ſtill withſtood the Spaniſh power*, were thoſe of Guelderland, Zutphen, Utretcht, Holland, Zealand, Frizeland, and Over-Iſelle; with ſome few towns in Brabant and Flanders. Circumſcribed within the limits of theſe narrow iſlands and diſtricts, interſected with rivers and bays of the ſea; the war was ſlowly carried on by both parties. From the variety of natural obſtacles, the labour and expence of the military operations were increaſed. The number of foreign officers and ſoldiers, now retained in the pay of the ſtates, rendered their forces more a match for the veteran bands of Spain. The conqueſts of the latter were made with difficulty, and length of time. Upon the other hand, as the obſtructions to commerce became greater by the gradual loſs of places; the campaigns were ſeverely felt by the ſubjects of the confederacy. Without regard to this laſt circumſtance, the Earl of Leiceſter, acting altogether according to military views, and ſtudying to enlarge the funds of his army, contributed to ſtraiten the trade

* Thuan. lib. 85. p. 118.

1586.

trade of the ſtates. He prohibited the freighting of ſhips, with warlike ſtores, or proviſions of any kind, for neutral ports, as well as to thoſe of the enemy. By this, and other reſtrictive orders iſſued by him, it was Leiceſter's aim, to procure redemption-money from the merchants. But, as always happens, where the freedom of commerce is tampered with; he only drove numbers of the mercantile people out of the country, into Hamburgh, Emden, Bremen, and other Hanſe towns. This proved the ſource of the diſcontent, which the ſtates ſoon teſtified againſt him.

The town of Grave being beſieged by the Spaniards under Count Mansfeldt; the firſt remarkable appearance of the Engliſh auxiliaries was in building and defending a fort, that ſerved for its relief. A party of them, commanded by Sir John Norris, gave a ſignal repulſe to a numerous body of the enemy *. Various exploits of valour, and important ſervices in the campaign, are mentioned by the hiſtorians, to the honour of the Engliſh captains. By their rapid aſſaults of places, and cutting off the convoys of the enemy; the more regular operations of Parma's army were often retarded; and while employed in the ſiege of any conſiderable place, that general always found his advantages impaired, by their ſurpriſe of ſome fort or garriſon. Edward Stanley's proweſs was famous: He graſped the enemy's ſpear puſhed againſt him, and hung by it, till he was pulled up to the top of the rampart. Sir Roger Williams joined with Shenk, a native of Frizeland, in an attempt of the moſt daring and dangerous nature. With a hundred horſemen, they endeavoured to penetrate, through Parma's entrenched camp, into the town of Venlo. Williams was inſtigated to the enterprize, by the pure deſire of glory; while Shenk had the additional motive of viſiting his wife and family in the beſieged town. They made their way,

* Thuan. Camden, ibid. Speed, b. 9. chap. 24.

Book II.

1586.

way, almoſt to the Spaniſh general's tent; and retreated with the loſs of forty ſoldiers. At Zutphen, where a large party of Spaniards, with a convoy, was defeated; Sir Philip Sidney received his mortal wound. In him, nature had ſo happily mixed her gifts of genius, with the manly and heroic endowments of the mind; that he was the object of general eſteem and love *. His countrymen deeply mourned the loſs of one, whom they admired as the brighteſt model of magnanimity, virtue, and amiable manners; and foreigners, who knew him, admitted the truth of the eulogy, and joined in the regret of his untimely death.

Death of Sir Philip Sidney. September.

Upon the ceſſation of the campaign, the Earl of Leiceſter, ready to depart into England, found various complaints made by the ſtates, againſt his adminiſtration. He took an artificial courſe to ſtifle them †. By a public act, he entruſted, during his abſence, the ſupreme authority in all civil and military affairs with the council of the ſtates; and, by another private one, he reſerved to himſelf the command over all governors of provinces, and cities, and even reſtricted their ordinary juriſdiction. From this equivocal delegation of his authority, joined to the contracted powers of the governors, many conteſts and diſorders aroſe; for which no preſent remedy could be found ‡. Every Captain in a garriſon acted the commandant; and the ſoldiers became mutinous, and abandoned to rapine. The ſtates, having the pretence of the public ſafety to plead, transferred their whole authority, and the charge of the commonwealth, upon Count Maurice of Naſſau. Without annulling Leiceſter's commiſſion; they hoped that Queen Elizabeth would be moved, by their complaints, to remove him from the government. Finding ſome of the accuſations againſt him exaggerated, ſhe appointed

December 3.

Diſcontent of the ſtates with Leiceſter.

1587. February.

* D'Aubigné, liv. 1. chap. 28. Thuan. ibid. p. 135. † Camden, p. 397. D'Aubigné, ibid. ‡ Speed, ibid.

pointed three commiſſioners to make ſuch inquiry, as might ſatisfy her, and appeaſe the ſtates. In the mean time; the campaign being opened by the Spaniards, with the ſiege of Sluyce; neceſſity obliged the ſtates to ſolicit Leiceſter's return, to take the command of their army. But, after the loſs of that place, new quarrels enſued between them. Dreading that Leiceſter's deſigns were ſimilar to thoſe of the late Duke of Anjou; the ſtates made an act diveſting him of his commiſſion. Too haughty to bear this afront, and unwilling to be forced by them; Leiceſter got the city of Leyden, and ſome other places to declare for him. Hoſtilities were begun, and diſpoſitions made by him, for a violent invaſion of the government; when Eliſabeth's abſolute command obliged her proud, and ambitious favourite, to deſiſt from his purpoſes, and return into England.

1587.

Leiceſter's recal to England. Decemb. 17.

The nations aided by foreign armies, have, often, ſuffered from their uſurpations. The ſtates of the Netherlands, for the ſecond time, experienced this misfortune. After Leiceſter's formal reſignation of his authority; the ſedition, and revolt of ſeveral towns being continued; it required the appointment of another Engliſh general, to ſupport Count Maurice of Naſſau, in reducing them to obedience *. In the midſt of ſuch broils; the ſtates could not have eſcaped being overpowered; by one ſo capable of improving every advantage, as the Prince of Parma. But this wiſe commander's attention was, at this juncture, directed to another object. Required by Philip II. to prepare for the grand expedition intended by him, againſt England; in which he was to have the chief command; Parma began to collect magazines, and all kind of ſtores, for land and ſea-ſervice; and to open canals for the tranſportation of them, to the harbours oppoſite to England. The hiſtorians generally agree, that this enterpriſe had been fixed for the year 1587; but

* D'Aubigné. Cambden, ibid.

Book II.

1588. April 12. but ſome accidents occaſioned the deferring of it, till the following one. On account of theſe extraordinary preparations, the campaign againſt the ſtates was not puſhed with vigour. A congreſs for peace, which took place in the ſpring of the enſuing year, likewiſe contributed to interrupt the Duke's progreſs in the Netherlands; and gave the ſtates ſome time to recover, from their domeſtic confuſion.

The appearance of the formidable navy of Spain, in the Britiſh channel, ſuſpended the land-enterpriſes * of Count Maurice; and drew the Duke of Parma, to his proper ſtation with his army at Dunkirk. Both of them attended, with a different anxiety, to the

July 19. progreſs of the Armada, along the coaſt of England. The latter, having made all diſpoſitions neceſſary for the embarkation of his troops, on board light veſſels, and flat-bottomed boats, fitted with rafters, was too prudent, however, to venture his army upon ſea; till he ſaw a probability of a ſafe paſſage for it. Whether diſſatisfied with what he obſerved of the unſkilful conduct of the commanders of the Armada, or whether, from private diſlike of the ſervice to which he was appointed in England; Parma, never embarraſſed, or unready, certainly ſhowed no forwardneſs, to act his part in this enterpriſe. In the mean time; the ſhips of war belonging to Holland and Zealand, being furniſhed with the largeſt artillery, and manned with ſoldiers, aſſiſted the Engliſh fleet in blockading the harbours of Flanders; until the diſperſion and flight of the Spaniſh navy enſued. Accuſed, and inveighed againſt by the Spaniſh Generals, as the obſtructor of their ſucceſs in the expedition; the Duke of Parma led his army to the important ſiege of Bergen-op-Zome. His uſual good fortune failing; he was obliged to raiſe it †. Upon the occaſion of a diſaſter, that happened to a part of his troops, at this ſiege; it is remarked, that this great commander, whoſe coolneſs,

* Speed, B. 9. chap. 24. D'Aubigné, liv. 2. ch. 29. † D'Aubigné, ibid.

neſs, in all accidents, equalled his other qualities, was, for once, ſeen to loſe his temper, and to give orders, in the height of his paſſion, for the aſſault of a bulwark, which would have been fatal to his ſoldiers. He was reſtrained from his purpoſe, with difficulty, by ſome of his officers; who were ſenſible, that the wiſdom of the General was overcome, by the emotions of the man. So difficult do even the moſt temperate find it, to preſerve their compoſure in every adventure of the field!

1589.

In the ſpring of the following year; the armies of the Spaniards and the ſtates, again, took the field; but no important action enſued. In the cabinet of Philip II.; another ſcene of action was planned out, for the Duke of Parma. As the conteſt between Henry III. and the catholic league in France, proceeded to a criſis; Philip determined to ſupport the latter, with the more vigour, that he might compenſate, in ſome meaſure, for the blemiſh of his military fame; by the ſignal diſaſter of his Armada. In conſequence of this reſolution; Parma was ordered to hold his troops in readineſs, for an expedition into France.

April.

The review of the affairs of England, taken at large, from the year 1584, may be juſtly ſaid, to include that of ſeveral other ſtates in Europe. When Queen Elizabeth, changing her political procedure, began to contend, in earneſt, with the catholic King; ſhe exerted her political abilities in a ſurpriſing manner; and combated, vigorouſly, both at home and abroad, the machinations of his policy, and the efforts of his might. Her league with the Belgic ſtates, was the firſt diſcovery of her reſolution to defy his power, and to riſk engaging in open hoſtilities with him *. Previous to this meaſure, ſhe had endeavoured, by her propoſed match with the Duke

Affairs of England. 1584.

* Camden, B. 3. p. 305. et 312.

Book II.

of Anjou, and other ſchemes of treaties with the court of France, to draw Henry III. into an offenſive alliance with her, againſt Spain. As the correſpondence of the latter, with the partizans of the league in France, bore a reſemblance to the plots of the popiſh party in England; ſhe had reaſon to preſume, that Henry would be induced to take meaſures for their common ſafety. But finding him more inclined to bear indignities, than to act for the honour of his crown; ſhe applied all her induſtry to animate the proteſtant Princes and ſtates, every where, to defend themſelves againſt the ambitious enterpriſes of the Spaniſh Monarch *. She kept a correſpondence with the King of Navarre, and the proteſtant party, in France, ſupplied them with money, and encouraged Engliſh volunteers to reſort
1585. to their ſervice. Beſides undertaking the protection of the Dutch ſtates, by her treaty with them; ſhe took care, by the diſtribution of penſions, and gratuities, to maintain the intereſt of her friends in Scotland.

Of Scotland.

After the advancement of the young King James VI. to the ſovereignty, in the room of his mother; two parties ſtrove, in Scotland, for the direction of his counſels and government †. One of them, which was that of his French allies, the Guiſes, endeavoured to increaſe that Prince's filial regard to his mother, and to induce him, not only to exert his power to procure her liberty, but to aſſociate her, with himſelf, in the ſovereign adminiſtration. The other party, in the intereſt of Queen Elizabeth, uſed all arguments to perſuade him, to cultivate a ſtrict friendſhip with her, as one ableſt to protect him, and to ſecure the tranquility of his government; founded, as it was, on the maintenance of the reformed religion. For ſome time, the eaſily convulſed ſtate was embroiled, by theſe factions; and the young King's authority was turned different ways, according

* Ibid. B. 4. p. 431. † Acta regia, p. 51. Cambden. B. 3. p. 284.

ing to their various ſway *. At length, the intereſt of Elizabeth prevailed; who got James to conclude a league with her, upon the principle of neceſſary defence, againſt the dreaded deſigns of the catholic powers. It was called, in the preamble, a *ſacred* one; and the confederacies of the popiſh princes, for extirpating other religions, were declared to be the motives to it.

1586. June.

It was Queen Elizabeth's wiſe foreſight of danger, from the deſigns of Philip II. and not her genius for political intrigues, which prompted her to extend her influence among foreign ſtates, and to engage them, at great expence, to join with her in oppoſing his formidable power. She felt, in her own kingdom, the pernicious efficacy of his intrigues; which kept alive the religious enmity of her catholic ſubjects, to her government; and, from the inclinations of the bigotted party of them, to ſupport the title of Mary Stuart, the Scottiſh Queen, to the ſucceſſion, had produced ſeveral dangerous conſpiracies, and plots, againſt her perſon †. Detained long in captivity, and having little confidence in the aid of the court of France; this unfortunate Princeſs became ſubſervient to the projects of the Spaniſh Monarch; who covered them with the pretext of religion. On account of theſe circumſtances, in which Elizabeth was placed by the clandeſtine practices of her enemies; ſhe was obliged to provide for her ſecurity, at home, with rigid caution. In ſome reſpects, the principles of her government, equitable, in the general, and mild, when compared with thoſe of her immediate predeceſſors, were highly arbitrary and ſevere ‡. The ſpies employed by Walſingham her miniſter, to detect delinquents, and the artifices he uſed to enſnare and convict them, appear more ſuited to the reign of *Tiberius Caeſar*, than to that of a Princeſs, ſo juſtly renowned as Elizabeth. Though ſhe, certainly, knew better, what belonged to her prerogative,

Queen Elizabeth's domeſtic ſituation.

* Cambden, ibid. p. 303. et 331. † Ibid. ‡ Rymer's Foedera abrid. p. 85. Cambd. p. 294.

Book II.

tive, and civil government, than to admit private aſſociations to be formed among her ſubjects, in time of peace; yet thoſe promoted by the Earl of Leiceſter, and other courtiers, were encouraged and approved *. In the parliament, a bill of aſſociation was paſſed, for proſecuting, with the utmoſt ſeverity, all attempts againſt the Queen's ſafety; and an extraordinary tribunal of four and twenty commiſſioners, inveſted with arbitrary powers, was alſo appointed to inveſtigate and determine, with reſpect to all ſuch treaſonable deſigns.

Proceedings againſt Queen Mary.

The terror into which the nation was thrown, by the diſcovery of the plots of the Spaniſh agents, and the emiſſaries of Rome, alone apologiſed for thoſe political exceſſes. The laſt mentioned of them, had a particular reference to the arraignment of the Scottiſh Queen; as the dreaded diſturber of Elizabeth's domeſtic quiet. Babington's plot furniſhed the requiſite materials for it. The particulars of this petty conſpiracy, the amount of the evidence, and Mary's concern in it, have been unfolded by ſeveral late writers; while the diſcuſſion of thoſe points can have little influence upon the judgment of the world, with reſpect to the juſtice of her trial, her condemnation, and her death. All theſe were ſo unprecedented, and inhumane, and, in the forlorn circumſtances of that Princeſs, ſo barbarous; that the admiſſion of her guilt will not palliate, and much leſs juſtify, the procedure againſt her. The hiſtorians, who inſiſt upon the argument of neceſſity, and ſelf-defence, as Eliſabeth's excuſe, ſink the idea, that is generally formed, of the vigour of her government, and of the attachment of her ſubjects to her; by repreſenting both of them in conſtant hazard of being ſubverted, by the partizans of an exiled Princeſs, detained by her as a captive.

1586. December.

While Elizabeth ſtudied, in vain, to remove from herſelf, the charge of cruelty, by publiſhing the ſentence of the judges againſt her

* Camd. p. 309.

her royal kinſwoman, and getting it confirmed in the parliament*; Bellievre was ſent on purpoſe from France, by Henry III. to interpoſe, by arguments, and intreaties, in Mary's behalf. The memorial preſented by him, was drawn in a form ſo ſententious, and with ſo much acuteneſs, and ſtrength of reaſon; that moſt of the hiſtorians have thought it worthy of being recorded†. What du Maurier reports, in the preface to his memoirs, about Bellievre having told his father, that he had ſecret inſtructions from Henry, to abandon Mary to her fate, and even to haſten it; has obtained more credit, than is due to ſuch a queſtionable teſtimony. That Henry might be cold, and indifferent, about engaging with vigour, in her defence; is credible: But it ſuits not with his character, to ſuppoſe him deſirous, that one, who had been Queen of France, ſhould be diſhonoured by her condemnation, and rendered a ſpectacle to the world, by her violent death. It is no argument of the truth of this anecdote, though urged as ſuch by Rapin, and others; that Henry was charged with the accuſation contained in it, by the partizans of the league. There was no reproach, tending to defame this Prince, or render him odious to the catholics, at home, and abroad, which they ſcrupled to fix upon him.

Unmoved by the expoſtulations, and entreaties, of the French, and other foreign envoys; untouched with the more indignant and pathetic remonſtrances of James of Scotland, in cloſe alliance with her; the Engliſh Queen, inſenſible to the voice of fame, and the motives of honour, allowed the warrant for Mary's death to be iſſued ‡, and ſoon executed, at the caſtle of Fotheringhay. The letters written by her to Elizabeth, without any expreſſions of reſentment, or bitterneſs, ſhowed that her ſpirit was not only reſigned,

1587. Feb. 8. Tragical death of Queen Mary.

but

* Thuan. lib. 86. p. 157. † Bayle's critique de l'hiſtoire du Calvinizme, p. 31. Acta regia abridg. p. 100. ‡ Camden, p. 382. Thuan. ibid. D'Aubigné, liv. 1. chap. 28.

but ſurpriſingly compoſed, to her tragical fate. Her behaviour, during the affecting circumſtances of it, was ſuch, that the magnanimity of a Princeſs, and of a martyr, as ſhe believed herſelf to be, for the catholic faith, was ſuſtained by her. To her fame, that ſupport was derived from compaſſion, which not the unfortunate only, but the criminal obtain; when ſubjected to ſufferings of the exceſſive kind.

However the death of the Queen of Scots may be ſuppoſed to have daſhed the hopes of Elizabeth's domeſtic enemies, it had no ſuch influence upon her foreign ones. The projects of the Spaniſh monarch, the chief of them, were only accidentally connected with the protection of that unhappy princeſs. As the champion of the apoſtolic church, he accounted himſelf bound, by the bull of excommunication againſt Elizabeth, to invade England, and to wreſt the ſceptre from that heretical Queen *. He alſo maintained a perſonal right to it; as being the deſcendent, by a daughter, of the houſe of Lancaſter, and the neareſt catholic prince, in lineal ſucceſſion to the crown. From Mary's execution, which was deplored at the catholic courts, he was furniſhed with a new and plauſible argument of quarrel, and indignation againſt Elizabeth; and beſides his hopes of ſeveral of them concurring with him, he knew, that King James had an irreſiſtible incitement to renounce his league with her, and to ſeek, by any hoſtile power, the revenge of his mother's death. In this aſpect of Queen Elizabeth's foreign affairs; it was her good fortune, and that of Britain in general, that the defence of her kingdom was connected with the intereſt of the other nations in Europe; whether proteſtant or catholick. Alike threatened by the tremenduous power of Spain; it was their policy to ſupport, rather than to pull down, any ſtate marked out by Philip

* Rymer, abridg. 89. et 146.

lip II. for a conqueſt. Notwithſtanding the devotion of Henry III. to the catholic church *; he ſhowed this knowledge of his political intereſt; and, though too much embroiled at home, to declare openly againſt Spain, he gave ſecret, and early intelligence to Elizabeth, about the warlike preparations of Philip againſt her. This Princeſs, aware of her great danger from that quarter, not only endeavoured to leſſen or divert the ſtorm, by enabling the ſtates of Holland to ſupport the war againſt the Duke of Parma †; but ſhe diſpatched Sir Francis Drake, with a ſquadron of men of war, to the coaſt of Spain, and Admiral Cavendiſh with another, to the ſouthern parts of America. The deſtruction made by the former, of near a hundred ſhips and veſſels at Cadiz, beſides ſome valuable prizes taken at ſea, is reckoned to have diſabled the catholic King from executing his purpoſe, of invading England, in the courſe of this year. Some Engliſh writers likewiſe aſſert, that the ſkill and management of a merchant of London contributed chiefly to retard this invaſion. By his intereſt in the bank of Genoa, upon which Philip depended for pecuniary ſupplies, and by his credit with foreign merchants, he cauſed bills, to ſuch an amount, to be drawn on the Genoeſe funds; that the large demands of the Spaniſh monarch, for rigging out his Armada, could not be anſwered. What remains of the narrative of the Engliſh affairs, may be properly included in the review of thoſe of Spain.

1587. Delay of the invaſion of England.

By the conqueſt of Portugal, and the progreſs of the Duke of Parma, in reducing the maritime provinces of the Netherlands; Philip II. cheriſhed his hopes of obtaining an extenſive empire and dominion in Europe. His father, Charles V. though inveſted with the imperial dignity, had not ſuch a proſpect of ſucceſs in this ambition. Supplied with the treaſures of the new world, all-powerful at ſea, and retaining in his ſer-

Affairs of Spain.

* Speed, p. 1178. † Acta regia, p. 92.

Book II.

ſervice the beſt troops of Europe; Philip had no ſuch formidable opponents in the field, as Francis I. and Henry II. of France proved to his father. But, though without a rival of his grandeur, in any one of the European Princes, and ſcarcely to be controuled by the confederacy of ſeveral of them, this crafty monarch, inſtead of giving a general alarm, concealed his ambitious deſigns, and his ſtrength,
1586. and acted only as proper opportunities preſented themſelves. Without raiſing a flame of war, he found the means of weakening the ſtates around him. The conteſts about religion, which ſubſiſted with violence in moſt of them, whether catholic or proteſtant, afforded him an opportunity of fomenting their diſſentions. Affecting the reputation of being the only true defender of the catholic hierarchy, he employed a number of agents, and emiſſaries, every where, to cabal with the diſaffected and the bigotted, and to bribe the turbulent or neceſſitous nobles, in various courts. By this means, there was ſcarce one ſtate in Europe, in which a Spaniſh party was not formed. Feared, on account of his many zealous partizans, and his vaſt power, few princes were inclined to quarrel with him. The confederate ſtates of Holland, and the Queen of England, were the only powers that oppoſed his ambition, and ventured to combat it. Philip's patience, under various provocations from the latter, ap-
1587. peared unaccountable. But it was now known, that he made ſecret, but mighty preparations for war. The largeſt ſhips for combat, and veſſels of all kinds, fitted out in the harbours of Spain and Portugal, for a courſe of years, diſcovered, to the intelligent, his reſolution to be fixed for ſome formidable enterpriſe. The ſlowneſs of his procedure, contributed to cover his deſign; and, though apprehenſions were entertained amongſt the neighbouring ſtates, and ſome explication of his purpoſes was required; none of them were ſo daring with Philip, as to demand, with proper ſpirit, his categorical anſwer.

At

1588.

At length, as the aſtrologers, a century before *, had predicted it to be, the *wonderful year* enſued: And, without any faith in their dark ſcience, it ſeemed, from a coincidence of circumſtances, to be ripe for ſome great political revolution in Europe. When Philip II. had, at his leiſure, prepared, what was, not improperly, called his *Invincible Armada;* that monarch, and the Emperor Rodolph, his near kinſman and ally, had made peace with the Turks. France was immerſed in civil broils, and the moſt powerful faction in the kingdom, devoted to Spain: The ſtates of the Netherlands laboured under a burden of war, which they could not, by themſelves, longer ſupport: The King of Scotland was reckoned to be doubtfully inclined: England itſelf was not free from the cabals of the diſaffected papiſts; and the other powers of Europe ſtood, either unconcerned, or under timorous ſuſpenſe, and anxiety about the object and iſſue of the alarming enterpriſe †. It was now divulged abroad, that it was directed againſt England; and liſts of the navy and land-forces being publiſhed in ſeveral languages, conveyed a frightful idea of their irreſiſtible ſtrength. Beſides many obvious motives that determined Philip to an expedition, which, if ſucceſsful, put him in poſſeſſion of one of the firſt kingdoms of Europe, inſured him of the conqueſt of Scotland and Ireland, and would cut ſhort the further reſiſtence of the ſtates of Holland; the air he could give it, as a *Cruſade*, againſt a heretical kingdom, was agreeable to the genius of the Spaniſh nation, and his own. Sixtus Quintus renewed his predeceſſor's bulls of excommunication and depoſition againſt Elizabeth, imparted his benediction to Philip, and all that joined with him, in promoting the laudable enterpriſe. Several Princes, from Italy and Germany, obeyed his holy mandate, to revenge the inſulted altars of the apoſtolic church; and engaged themſelves, as volunteers, in the meritorious ſervice.

Equipment of the Spaniſh Armada.

* D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 29. Thuan.

† Camden, ibid. p. 403.

Number of the ſhips, and their burden.

The equipment and furniture of the *Armada*, both for ſea and land-ſervice, were, every way, equal to the fame of it *. A hundred and thirty ſhips, having, from their different conſtruction and capacity, the ſundry names of galleons, galleaſſes, row-gallies, and other epithets, compoſed this navy; which had alſo a number of advice-boats, and other ſmall craft, attending it. The larger galleons were from eight to thirteen hundred tuns of burden, and carried from thirty to fifty pieces of cannon. On board this fleet were embarked, beſides 8000 marines, and 2000 galley-ſlaves †, thirty regiments, or 172 enſigns of foot-ſoldiers, amounting to 20,000 men. Five of theſe regiments were the veteran *Tertias* of Italy and Spain; and others of them, the provincial bands of Spain and Portugal. A hundred and thirty Spaniſh Lords and gentlemen, with their retinue, became volunteers in the expedition. The warlike ſtores, and ammunition, of every kind, with the proviſions of victuals, freſh water, wines, oil, vinegar, and medicines, were fully proportioned to the exigencies of ſuch an armament. It appears, by a computation made, that three hundred weight of biſcuit, were allotted to each galleon; at the rate of fifty pounds a month to every man on board; ſo that other neceſſaries being furniſhed in the ſame proportion; the whole navy was victualled for ſix months. The various apparatus, which the hiſtorians have minutely recorded, ſhowed the extreme attention and diligence uſed in the ſupplies, and arrangement of the land and ſea-forces of the Armada; which having looſed from Cadiz, Liſbon, and other ports, ſet ſail for its general rendezvous at the Groyne, in Gallicia; being the harbour neareſt to England. Upon its approach to the Bay of Biſcay, a ſtorm aroſe, which occaſioned the diſperſion of many ſhips, the diſabling of ſome, and the loſs of two or three. After ſome time ſpent in refitting, they again put to ſea; and, having a favourable wind, from

The land-forces, and ſtores.

1588. May 29.

July 21.

* Mem. de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 86. Thuan. lib. 89. p. 248. † D'Aubigné, liv. 1. chap. 27. Speed, b. 9. chap. 24.

from the ſouth, the whole fleet, in a few days, came within ſight of the Lands-end of England. July 29.

This advancement of the Spaniſh Armada to the Engliſh coaſt, without being diſcovered, or encountered by the Engliſh fleet, was chiefly owing to the accident of the ſtorm, by which it had at firſt ſuffered. Such rumours were ſpread, and ſo many fictitious narratives were given, about its general demolition by the tempeſt; that the Engliſh court, too credulous, in the moſt imminent danger that ever threatened the nation *, had ſuſpended its orders for the fleet of obſervation continuing at ſea. The Queen herſelf, who never erred by want of vigilance, was ſo much convinced that the danger was paſt, at leaſt for that ſeaſon, as to diſpatch a meſſage to the Admiral, requiring him to ſend off four of the largeſt men of war, that they might be laid up at Chatham. Whether the congreſs that was held near Oſtend, between her envoys and thoſe of Spain, about a peace, had contributed to deceive her, while ſhe meant to amuſe her adverſaries, or that Walſingham's intelligence had entirely failed him in this criſis; it is certain, that both Elizabeth, and her miniſter, had reſigned their immediate apprehenſions, about the Armada of Spain. But, happily, Lord Effingham Howard, the Admiral of England, thought, that greater circumſpection than was ſhown by the council at land, became his place and charge at ſea. Without complying with an order that, too precipitately, diſmiſſed the beſt guard of the nation, he ſteered his courſe towards the coaſt of Gallicia. A ſettled change of the wind to the ſouth, made him, juſtly, dread that the enemy's fleet might ſail from the Groyne, paſs him, undiſcovered, and reach the defenceleſs coaſt of England. He returned ſpeedily to Plymouth; and, having allowed his mariners ſome days to refreſh themſelves on ſhore, he determined to put out to his former ſtation. In that ſhort interval, the Spaniſh Armada was diſcovered, by the captain of ſome roving

Unexpected arrival of the Armada on the coaſt of England.

 pinnace,

* Camden. ibid. p. 410. Speed. ibid.

Book II.

pinnace, anchoring near the Lizzard point. The information was ſcarcely given to the Admiral of England in time ſufficient, to recall the ſailors, and haul out his ſhips from the harbour, againſt the ſqualls of wind that blew into it; when it was ſeen next day at noon, to the aſtoniſhment and terror of many beholders from the land of England, in all its grand and awful array, advancing ſlowly, with an eaſy gale, but full ſails, towards Plymouth. Seven miles of the bay ſeemed covered by the extenſion of the Armada, though bent into the form of a creſcent. The towering fabric of the galleons, whoſe decks roſe high above the waves, threw ſuch a ſhade upon their ſurface, as had not been ſeen by the Engliſh mariners; and gave a diſcouraging view of the ſuperior ſtrength of thoſe bulky ſhips of war, compared to their own. It is probable *, that, if the opportunity had been embraced, of locking up the Engliſh ſhips in the harbour, or, of encountering them in the bay, where their quickneſs in ſailing and tacking about, could have little availed them; the conſequences might have proved fatal. Even the ſeizing of Plymouth, in the firſt conſternation, perhaps, might have been atchieved, by the vaſt power of the Spaniſh fleet. This counſel was propoſed by Ricaldo, the Admiral, and Diego de Valdeza, to the Duke de *Medina Sidonia*, the generaliſſimo of the expedition. But this chieftain, whoſe orders were ſtrict, to attempt nothing, till his conjunction with the Duke of Parma, knew too well the rigid obedience Philip required, to venture any tranſgreſſion of them. Having caſt anchor at the *Iſle of Wight*, he ſoon paſſed by Plymouth, and gave the Engliſh fleet a ſeaſonable relief from its diſadvantageous poſition.

Aſſault of Plymouth propoſed.

The Engliſh navy, conducted by Lord Howard, and Sir Francis Drake, two experienced commanders, gained, now, the benefit of the

* Thuan. lib. 89. p. 251.

The Armada attacked by the Engliſh fleet.

the open ſea, and of hanging on the rear of the Armada; as it ſailed, heavily, before the wind. A cloſe engagement was, for ſeveral prudential reaſons, avoided by the Engliſh admiral; but the annoyance of the enemy, as occaſions offered, was ſtrenuouſly eſſayed, and effectuated by him *. During ſeveral days, in which the Spaniſh fleet paſſed through the Britiſh channel; three attacks, upon diviſions of it, that lagged behind, or were accidentally ſeparated from its main body, were made by the Engliſh ſquadron. In each of them, the ſuperiority of the latter, in this kind of vague combat, was manifeſted. The unwieldy galleons were pierced in their hulks, and ſhattered in their rigging; by the ſhot of the lighter, and more tractable veſſels of their opponents. Accidents, to which the former were more expoſed, in any difficulty, alſo contributing to their hurt; the large galleon of Don Pedro de Valdeza, with another ſmaller veſſel, fell into the hands of the Engliſh; who, on their part, ſuffered nothing, by the ſhot of the enemy, that generally flew over them. Only Captain Cock, in a trading ſloop, ſhowed how an Engliſh ſeaman could fight his ſhip to the laſt; and die, bravely, rather than ſurrender. Having great ſtrength for defence, but no offenſive power; and, like a fleet of huge incumbered tranſports, rather than of men of war; the Armada proceeded to the frith of Calais, and Dover; ruffled by the ſeveral aſſaults it had ſuſtained, and followed, ſtill, by the Engliſh; whoſe ſpirits were the more raiſed, and invigorated to the combat, in proportion to the perceptible dejection of their enemies.

While the Armada rode, at anchor, near Calais, expecting to be joined by the Duke of Parma, who, by frequent meſſages ſent to him, had been required to iſſue forth with his powers from the harbours of Flanders; a new calamity enſued, which ſurpaſſed its other

* Camden, p. 412.

Book II.

other misfortunes *. Upon experience of the almoſt impenetrable thickneſs of the Spaniſh galleons; another kind of aſſault, than that of the cannon, was, by the ſkill of the Engliſh commanders, prepared for them. Eight fire-ſhips, equipped with all their combuſtible ſtores, were, in the dark hour of the night, ſent down, and puſhed into the midſt of their fleet. A general ſurprize aroſe; joined with conſternation, and hurry to ſhun a danger; which ſeemed the more terrible, by being new, and unknown, to many of the Spaniſh Captains. They cut their cables, or dragged their anchors, and, with much confuſion, run out to ſea. Driving at random, ſeveral of them could not hear, or did not obey the ſignals, given from the admiral's ſhip, to return to their ſtation. To one galleon, the ſand-banks about Calais, became fatal; and two others, forced by the enemy, upon the ſhelves of Oſtend, were taken; while the whole fleet, with difficulty drawing together, from its diſſipation, was in the utmoſt peril of being driven into the ſhallows, and ſandy gulphs of Zealand. A ſouth-weſt wind, ſpringing up, only ſaved them from impending ruin. Being carried by it into the German ocean; it was then determined, in a council of the chief commanders, to conſider their enterprize, againſt England, as impracticable; and to ſteer their courſe, by the Northern ſeas, back into Spain. Proceeding, in conſequence of this reſolution, towards the Orcades of Scotland; they experienced the dangers of this navigation; altogether unknown to their mariners; through the rocky, and tempeſtuous friths of thoſe regions. The wrecks of ſeveral ſhips, on the rugged, and inhoſpitable coaſts, of the Northern Iſles, and of Ireland, accumulated the various miſchances of the Armada; and rendered its loſs, in ſhips, and men, equal to a great overthrow; in any ſuppoſed engagement with an enemy †. Though the computation of the Spaniards, and that of the Engliſh, about

Fire-ſhips uſed by the Engliſh.

General danger and diſperſion of the Armada. 1588. Aug. 9.

* Speed, ibid. p. 1183. Camden. Thuan. ibid. p. 256.

† Mem. de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 94.

about the injury it ſuſtained, was conſiderably different; the former allowed it to amount to thirty-two ſhips, and ten thouſand men; beſides a thouſand more, carried priſoners into England.

The loſs and diſcredit incurred by Spain.

Such was the reſult of this mighty enterprize, by Philip II.; famous, and memorable, in Europe, as being the moſt formidable one ever undertaken by any of its ſtates, againſt another; and that threatened, not only the entire ſubverſion of their political balance, but the eſtabliſhment of the dominion of Spain, in the weſt; in ſuch extent, as would have, ſoon, raiſed it to univerſal monarchy. By coſting Philip, beſides the diſgrace to his arms, twenty millions of crowns, or thirty-five millions of livres*, as Mendoza his ambaſſador eſtimated; the unfortunate expedition of the Armada proved a conſumption of his treaſures, which could not be eaſily repaired. The conſtant drain upon them, by the wars in the Netherlands, together with the additional ſubſidies to the catholic league in France, may be reckoned, upon the whole, to have compleated the effuſion of the revenues of the gold and ſilver mines of America. By the triumph of England, at this juncture, other nations were ſecured from the invaſions of Spain. This advantage was the greater, as the balance againſt Philip, was held by a maritime power; capable, not only, of reſiſting his aſſaults, but of invading his American ſettlements, and of riffling, by captures at ſea, thoſe late diſcovered riches, which he hoped to employ, in ſubjecting the kingdoms of Europe to his extenſive empire.

1589. After providing againſt any future machinations of the popiſh malecontents at home, and uſing her beſt endeavours, to encourage and ſupport the King of Scotland, in defeating and puniſhing an inſurrection of the Spaniſh partizans, in his kingdom†; Elizabeth failed

* Ibid.

† Camden, B. 4. p. 429.

Book II.

failed not to profecute her advantage; by retaliating upon the Spaniſh monarch; in a manner that teſtified her contempt of his boaſted ſtrength. Such a ſpirit for enterpriſes againſt him, had the baffling of his great Armada raiſed, in the Engliſh captains and nobles; that, with inconſiderable help from the government, and by the concert only of thoſe famous commanders, Drake, and Norris, with other private adventurers; a large fleet, with a great body of land-forces, was equipped, and fitted out, for aſſaulting the coaſt-towns of Spain, and Portugal. To give the expedition a more threatening appearance; Don Antonio, the exiled claimant of the Portugueſe crown, was engaged to a new experiment of his fortune in it; to the promoting of which, the King of Morocco had promiſed his aſſiſtance. In conſequence of this armament; the Groyne, ſo lately the rendezvous of the naval power of Spain, was aſſaulted; its lower town was taken, and a conſiderable body of the Spaniſh militia beaten. Liſbon, the chief object of the expedition, was, next, beſet; by the forces being debarked, and Drake occupying the Tagus. But the exſpected inſurrection, in favour of Don Antonio, failed; and no ſuccours came from the Mooriſh King. In recompence for their diſappointment here; they ſeized ſixty ſhips, belonging to the Hanſe towns of Germany *, laden with corn and proviſions; and, after taking Caſcais, and burning Vigo, they returned, with rich booty, into England. The reputation of inſulting the coaſts of Spain, and coming off, victorious, was, yet, more than the gain that they acquired. The taſte for maritime enterpriſes, which rouſed the natural ſtrength of the Engliſh, was increaſed; and, by the various expeditions to the Weſt Indies, under Cavendiſh, Lord Howard, Sir Walter Raleigh; the ſinews of the Spaniſh power were cramped in ſuch a manner, as taught the Engliſh, ever after, where to exert their ſtrength; in their future conteſts with that mo-

1589. April 15. The coaſts of Spain invaded by the Engliſh.

1591, 1592.

* Acta regia, p. 95.

monarchy. As, in thoſe times, incurſions upon the Spaniſh ſettlements in America, and their plate fleets, were introduced, and encouraged; ſo the propenſity to them continued, amongſt the maritime ſtates; whoſe beſt harveſt was found to be, a war with Spain. 1591.

Intereſt of the powers of Europe in the civil combuſtion of France.

The pacific condition of the other European powers, hardly affords ground for reviewing their hiſtory. The general fate of Europe appeared, chiefly, to depend upon England maintaining its acquired weight in the balance, and on France recovering from its convulſed ſituation. The contagion of the league, cheriſhed by Spain, in the bowels of the latter, was become a rooted malady, which could not be expelled, but by time, and favourable accidents; joined to ſpirited conduct and wiſdom, in the French government. In caſe of the exit of Henry III. from the embroiled ſcene; matters were likely to be made worſe. But, by his coalition with the King of Navarre, the beſt proſpect of ſucceſs, againſt the league, and of the future tranquility of the kingdom, preſented itſelf. So important, and intereſting, did this turn of affairs in France ſeem to Queen Elizabeth; that ſhe ſent Sir Thomas Bodley * to encourage Henry in his oppoſition to the league; and to confirm the union of the two Kings, for aſſerting the independency of the crown and ſtate of France, againſt their enemies, and thoſe of many other ſtates in Europe.

* Camden, ibid. p. 433.

CHAP. VIII.

Fortune of the War, at firſt, various.—La Noüe, and Chaſtillon, diſplay their military Conduct and Valour.—Progreſs, and Superiority of the King's Forces.—Paris beſieged by them.—Henry is ſtabbed by James Clement, a Friar.—The Wound proves mortal.—His Death, and Character.

Book II. 1589. May.

INSTEAD of the more remote provinces of the kingdom being expoſed to their wonted ſufferings, by the civil war; its principal ſcene was changed, to thoſe of Normandy, Picardy, and Champagne; moſt adjacent to the Iſle of France, and the capital. The latter being the chief fortreſs of the league; the Duke of Mayenne made it his firſt object to ſecure it from any hoſtile annoyance; and, by reducing ſuch towns in its neighbourhood as oppoſed him, to animate the Pariſians more, to the ſupport of their common cauſe, by furniſhing the neceſſary ſubſidies to the war. The two Kings, on the other hand, not without hopes of being ſoon able to approach Paris, with their army, regulated their main undertakings by this view. But many detached enterprizes, which, in the firſt hurry of the adverſe parties to arms, were created from accidents, impoſſible to be foreſeen, required the attention of both; and, for ſome time, rendered doubtful the eſtimate of their comparative ſtrength.

The fortune of the war various at firſt.

As might be naturally expected, while the attachment of the governors of various places, was untried, and falſe computations were made, on both ſides, about the number and activity of their partizans; the enterpriſes of war were begun, and conducted, with

a variety of fortune. In Britanny*, the ſurpriſe of the Count de Soiſſons, by Laverdin, juſt revolted to the ſervice of the Duke de Mercoeur, and the league, and the diſperſion of his troops, conſequent to the Count's being taken priſoner; threw that province ſo much under the power of the league, that the retreat into it, eſpecially after ſome Spaniſh troops were landed there, was reckoned to be out of the dominions of France. Upon the King's ſide; an advantage was gained in Normandy, by the defeat of a multitude of the peaſants, called *Gautiers*, whom the prieſts had drawn forth, in their ruſty arms; by aſſurances of their being freed from the taxes. Though led by the Count de Briſſac, at the head of two hundred horſemen, to the relief of the town of Falaize, beſieged by the Duke of Monpenſier; a great ſlaughter was made of thoſe clumſy warriours; in revenge of the exceſſes committed by them. This advantage was, in ſome meaſure, compenſated by the Duke of Mayenne having poſſeſſed himſelf of the town of Vendoſme, by the treachery of the governor; and afterwards cutting off a party of ſoldiers under the Count de Brienne; who was himſelf taken priſoner, near Amboiſe. But, amongſt thoſe preliminary combats, none were more celebrated than two; in one of which, La Noüe conducted the loyaliſts; and, in the other, Chatillon was the leader of their party †. An attempt to relieve Senlis, beſieged by the Duke of Aumale, with a large body of troops, and a number of the volunteers of Paris, who were eager for the reduction of this adjacent town, gave occaſion to the firſt action. The reſolution of marching up a body of ſoldiers to the ſuccour of the ſtraitened town, the motion for an aſſault of the enemy, and the diſpoſition of the troops in the field, as framed, and concerted by La Noüe, do honour to the name of a well-bred officer; a character illuſtrated by many of the actions of this chieftain. Upon this occaſion, he had not properly,

Two combats more celebrated than the reſt;

* D'Aubigné, liv. 2. chap. 20. Ibid. chap. 19. † Ibid.

Book II.

1589.

and in one of them La Noüe's conduct is signalized.

May 17.

the chief command, or direction of the troops; which appertained to the Duke of Longueville, then young, and eaſily diſſuaded, by thoſe about him, from running the riſque of ſuch an enterpriſe. But the preſence of La Noüe, who gave his voice for attempting, by all means, to throw ſuccours into the place, prevailed with Longueville, and the braveſt officers, to act with a military ſpirit. To remove an objection, raiſed about furniſhing a quantity of powder, wanted in the garriſon of Senlis; La Noüe gave ſecurity upon his own eſtate for the payment of it. When the convoy was prepared, and his troops, in march, came in ſight of the Duke of Aumale's forces; they found them drawing up, in order of battle, to receive them. With the experienced eye of a veteran commander, La Noüe obſerved that the Duke's infantry formed their battalions, with the ſlowneſs and confuſion of raw ſoldiers, and that their troops of cavalry were too much advanced, to be ſupported by them. He ordered a charge to be given, by a body of his horſemen, that moment. In a ſhort ſpace of time, the Duke of Longueville, who had the conducting of the convoy left to him, ſaw, to his ſurpriſe, the ſquadrons of the enemy broken, and routed, in ſeveral places. With the ardor of a young warrior, he flew to the field of action; and aſſiſted in completing the victory; which was attended with the ſlaughter of nine hundred of the enemy, and the loſs of all their colours, cannon, and baggage. The reſerve, and modeſty of La Noüe was no leſs exemplary to the officers, than his valour and generoſity. It was not without much ſollicitation, that he took the chief command in the field; and, when the officers, after the victory, came to receive his orders, he told them, "That being, as well as they, ſubordinate to the Duke of Longueville; he was obliged to wait for thoſe given by him." Yet this atchievement, from ſeveral difficult circumſtances attending it, beſides that of the great inequality of the number of the troops he commanded, when compared to thoſe of the enemy, added much to his renown. By a ſingularity,

moſt

1589.

moſt remarkable in that age; the memory of the victory was not only preſerved, by an annual feſtival obſerved by the people of Senlis; but the name of its author was honoured in a particular way *. To the prayers for the King, one, in behalf of La Noüe, and his poſterity, notwithſtanding the popular horror of his *hugonotizm*, was added; and it was even continued, for ſome time, after his death. Henry III. in acknowledgment of the ſervice done by him, upon this occaſion, and on account of the general opinion of La Noüe's merit, ordered the brevet to be drawn, for his being created a Marſhal of France, upon the firſt vacancy of that office. But La Noüe's renown, as a ſoldier, always exceeding his fortune; he did not attain this dignity; while the confuſions, fatal to the King, the kingdom, and to himſelf, were prolonged, in their duration.

In the other Chatillon's valour is diſplayed.

The other action, though leſs important in its conſequences, deſerves to be recorded, as Chatillon's bravery, and the invincible ſpirit of the few old Hugonot troops he commanded, were characteriſed in it †. The catholic party, moſtly compoſed of the flower of the nobleſſe of Picardy, was rather ſuperior to them, in number, and commanded by La Saveuſe, the governor of Dourlens; in martial ſpirit, equal to any of his rank. It was an accident, that brought thoſe two detached parties to an engagement; which was reckoned to have been more obſtinately fought, than any other, at that period of the war. On the firſt ſhock, Chatillon himſelf, with ſome other Captains, and among them the Baron de Roni ‡, was thrown upon the ground. The rallying, in order again, was as quick as their being remounted. The Picard nobility, when broken, emulated their addreſs and valour. Four times, when their ſquadrons were driven from their ground; did they, reſolutely, renew the combat; till a hundred and twenty gentlemen were killed, and eighty priſoners

* P. Daniel, tom. 9. p. 391. liv. 3. Matthieu, ibid. p. 764.

† Daubigne, ibid.

‡ Mem. de Sully,

Book II. 1589.

ſoners taken; which amounted to near half the number of their whole party. Saveuſe reckoned it his greateſt misfortune to be amongſt the captives. As it was a ſignal trial of the military proweſs of two, nearly, equal parties; he could not ſupport the thought of being vanquiſhed in it; nor of ſurviving the loſs of many of his kinſmen. Though treated with compaſſion, and conſoled, by the King of Navarre; he gave way to indignation, and rage at his fate; and not ſuffering his wounds to be dreſſed, he was quickly ſeized with a fever, and delirium; in which he expired. When Chatillon brought the tidings of this atchievement, and preſented two ſtandards he had taken, to Henry III.; his Majeſty expreſſed, before all his court, the high idea he had of his military capacity and fortitude. "Ever ſince Chatillon, upon the rout of the German army, choſe, rather, to encounter a thouſand dangers, than ſurrender his colours; I knew, ſaid the King, that there was no ſervice of honour, or bravery, that he was not qualified to perform." Henry's ſenſibility of the ſignal ſervices done by him, and other Hugonot chieftains, was ſuch, that he endeavoured, by the moſt liberal promiſes of his favour and bounty to them, to engage them to turn catholics; without which, he ſtill thought he could not be ſecure of their attachment to him.

Progreſs of the King of Navarre in the campaign.

In the mean time, the King of Navarre, by preſerving the important poſt of Chateaudun, on the ſide of Tours next to Normandy, and of Baugency, in the front of the royal forces; had ſecured their advancement, by the way of Beauſſe, towards Paris. Henry himſelf, was much inclined to adopt this plan of the war; which, beſides the credit of inveſting the rebellious capital of his kingdom, gave the beſt hopes of ſhortening the military enterpriſes, by one deciſive blow *. But his natural inactivity, and the faint diſpoſition of

* D'Aubigné, chap. 21.

1589.

of many of his courtiers, to undergo any meaſure of toil, and hardſhip, ſtill operated upon him; and, under the pretext of cautious attention, induced him to defer the movement of his troops, from Tours. Rouſed, at length, by the congratulations for the victory at Senlis, and the proſpect of De Sancy's approach with the Swiſs batallions he had levied; Henry marched to the ſiege of Gergeau. As Orleans could not be reduced without much labour and time, it was left behind, unattempted; while, by the ſucceſs at Gergeau, and the voluntary ſubmiſſion of Gien and La Charité, to the King, all the bridges on the Loire, except thoſe of Nantz, and Orleans, were poſſeſſed by his garriſons. After entering into the territory of Beauſſe, Eſtampes was taken by aſſault. At this place, Henry received the grievous tidings, of the monitoire of Sixtus Quintus being publiſhed againſt him; by which he was menaced with excommunication, unleſs he ſet at liberty the Cardinal of Bourbon and the Primate of Lyons, and compeared, either in perſon, or by his proxy, at Rome, in ſixty days; to anſwer, with his accomplices, for the murder of the Cardinal of Guiſe, at Blois. Often reaſoned with, and inſtructed, as Henry had been, about the invalidity of ſuch a bull; he was ſenſibly affected with the news of it; and diſcovered, by his dejected and melancholy air, the diſquiet it gave him *. The King of Navarre's facetious vivacity diverted him more, from this fit of deſpondency, than the graveſt arguments: "There is a remedy for this evil; which is, directly, to beſiege Paris. Let us conquer, ſaid that Prince; and we are ſure of being abſolved. It is only in caſe of being beaten, that we ſhall be excommunicated; and have all our tranſgreſſions accumulated on our heads." This account of the application and efficacy of the papal bulls, was no leſs true, than ironical. Henry, longing to meaſure ſwords

He diverts Henry's apprehenſions and deſpondency.

* Matthieu, liv. 8. p. 757.

Book II. 1589. ſwords with his moſt inveterate enemies, the Pariſians, made an excurſion, with a choſen troop, as far as Montleheri; but their detached parties took refuge within the walls of the city.

June. Though the Duke of Mayenne was now arrived, with the beſt part of his troops, in Paris; he was too careful of his ſtrength, in the beginning of the war, to venture into the field. He contented himſelf, with throwing ſlight garriſons, under the command of ſome of the moſt reſolute captains of the league, into all thoſe ſmall towns, which lay in the line of the King's progreſs to the city. Their reduction coſt ſome time; but they were, gradually, forced to ſurrender. Amongſt ſome officers of the King's troops loſt in thoſe attacks, none was ſo much regretted *, as the brave Charboniere, campmaſter to the King of Navarre, and whoſe fate it was, to be killed by a ſhot; when that Prince, always near to danger, leaned his arm on his ſhoulder.

The royal force much augmented by foreign levies; But the advancement of the Swiſs, and other German troops, under Sanci, to whom the Duke of Longueville and La Noüe had joined themſelves, with all the bands they could muſter; gave ſo viſible a ſuperiority to the royal army; that the reſolution for the ſiege of Paris might well be taken. No chieftain nor officer, of Henry's court, had ever performed ſo important a ſervice, for the King; as this accompliſhed by Sanci. Under diſadvantages, and obſtacles, almoſt incredible, he got a body of ten thouſand Swiſs, two thouſand Lanſquenets, and twelve hundred Reiters, engaged to march into France; not only without money being advanced by him; but at an expence, furniſhed from Geneva, and other cantons. It was a piece of agency, altogether ſingular; which their fear, and hatred of the Duke of Savoy, only enabled him to execute; and his ſafe conduct of thoſe troops, by the circuit of the borders of Lorain, into the neighbourhood of Paris, was

* Ibid. D'Aubigné.

1589. July.

was alſo ſurpriſing. Henry received Sanci, with an emotion, expreſſive of the moſt ardent acknowledgment; and, in that flow of it, which was natural to the generous heart of that Prince, aſſured him, "That, though the recompence of his ſervices could not equal the merit of them; they ſhould be ſuch, as would exceed his hopes."

The Swiſs having joined the King's troops, after the reduction of Pontoize; Henry found his army increaſed to more than thirty thouſand men; well armed, and accuſtomed to the diſcipline of war. Two thirds of this army, being compoſed of foreign troops, and the proteſtant bands, under the King of Navarre; Henry had reaſon to reflect upon the fallacy of his own judgment, with reſpect to the invariable attachment of his catholic ſubjects to him; and on his unpolitical, as well as his unjuſt antipathy, and ſevere procedure againſt the Hugonot party. Even in the final determination that was now to be formed, about the ſiege of Paris; the ardor of the proteſtant troops, and the King of Navarre's authority, in a military debate, counterbalanced the objections of ſeveral of Henry's council; whoſe timidity in martial affairs correſponded to their heſitation, or daſtardly advice, in political ones *. The reſolution to inveſt the city being taken; Henry eſtabliſhed his quarters at the bridge of St Cloud; while his brother-in-law ranged his bodies of infantry, and his ſquadrons in the villages upon the banks of the Seine, as far as Vaugirard. Under the brave example of Chatillon, who had the charge of the moſt advanced poſt; the latter began their ſkirmiſhes with the light cavalry of the enemy †. To thoſe hardy troops, this kind of campaign ſeemed a gay diverſion; and they diſtinguiſhed themſelves, by frequent challenges of the Pariſian volunteers, to ſingle, or petty, combats with them. The novelty

Advance towards Paris;

July 31. and undertake the ſiege of it.

 of

* Ibid.

† Mem. de Sully, ibid.

Book II.

1589.

of their circumſtances, when in arms for their King, in oppoſition to his, and their ſworn foes, elevated their daring ſpirits to ſuch a degree, that the King of Navarre, though with ſome reluctance, was often obliged to reſtrain them. The emulation they excited, was diffuſed through the whole army. Its chiefs, and officers, equal in ſkill and capacity, to every enterpriſe, began to make ſuch diſpoſitions, for cutting off all the ſupplies of Paris; that its reſiſtance muſt have been ſoon puſhed to a deſperate extremity. With all his prudence and ability, the Duke of Mayenne, at the head of raw and undiſciplined troops, and having many accidents to fear, could not have long ſupported his ground in the capital, in oppoſition to the beſieging army. Foreign aid, he could not certainly expect, till much time was elapſed. But, in the commencement of this favourable proſpect, for the recovery of Paris, by the King, and the total overthrow of the league; an event, like the unexpected cataſtrophe of a dramatic action, ſuddenly changed the whole ſcene, and diverſified the fate of the kingdom.

Aſſaſſination of Henry III. undertaken by James Clement of the Dominican order.

James Clement, a Dominican, or Jacobin friar, came from Paris to the King's camp. Having a kind of paſſport through the army, ſigned by the Count de Brienne, then a priſoner in the city, and a letter that appeared to be written to the King, from the Preſident Harlai; he was allowed, after being ſtopt at one of the out-poſts, to hold his courſe to St Cloud *. The King's procurator-general, la Gueſle, took the charge of him; and, finding it inconvenient to preſent him to the King that night; he lodged him in his own apartment. This opportunity of examining him, more narrowly, and bringing his pretended meſſage to the King under ſuſpicion, was either not properly uſed; or did not avail to detect him. Clement's habit, his compoſure, his look, and ſpeech, neither expreſſive of wit, nor

* Thuan. lib. 96. p. 457.

1589.

nor guile, ſeemed to excuſe any jealous inquiry about his commiſſion, and errand *. He ſupped at la Gueſle's houſe, produced a long knife at table; and, when gone to his repoſe, was ſoon obſerved, by the ſervants, to be laid in a profound ſleep. Next morning, as Henry himſelf had appointed; la Gueſle conducted Clement to the King's lodgings. After waiting a little, till Henry came, undreſſed, and without his buff-doublet, from his bed-chamber, into his cloſet; he was introduced. Having received the letters from la Gueſle's hand, and beginning to peruſe them, attentively; the King deſired Clement to draw near his chair. The friar obſerving Henry's eye fixed on the papers, inſtantly drew forth his knife; and plunged the whole blade into the left ſide of his belly. Starting up with pain, and crying, "The wretch has killed me!" The King pulled out the knife, that ſtuck in his body, and daſhed it againſt the aſſaſſin's forehead. La Gueſle, almoſt demented with what he ſaw, drew his ſword, and run the deteſtable parricide thro' the body; and, in a few moments, from the vehement rage of the officers who entered at the noiſe, many other ſtabs being given to it; the carcaſe was toſſed from the window, into the court-yard; where it was put on a hurdle, and torn aſunder by horſes.

Auguſt 1.

The wound given to the King:

The conjectures about the inſtigation of Clement, to this execrable action, were various. Some believed it to be, altogether, the effect of a frantic enthuſiaſm, into which he had been gradually wrought, by the outrageous harangues of the preachers, againſt Henry. Others affirmed that one of his age, which was only twenty-two, could not have been impelled to the ſacrifice of his life, by undertaking ſuch a deed, without his imagination being practiſed upon, by the artifices of his fraternity, in the cloiſter; and the concurrence of ſome of the Pariſian council of devotees, to

 mature

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 774.

Book II. 1589.

mature the contrivance, and direct the execution of the horrid deſign. But, whilſt his ſudden ſlaughter prevented a ſcrutiny, that might have been made, and his too eaſy admiſſion, upon letters either forged, or fraudulently obtained, appeared ſtrange, and inexplicable; the King's dangerous ſituation drew the diſmal attention of all his officers, and attendants. A wide and deep wound, thro' which part of the gutts appeared, and the diſtreſsful pain he felt, ſtruck all around him, with terror of the conſequences *. A formal report, but not a direct judgment of his caſe, being delivered by his phyſicians and ſurgeons; it was agreed, that the apprehenſions entertained of his danger ſhould be concealed; and, leſt the rumour of it flying abroad, might be improved to the prejudice of the royal intereſt; diſpatches were tranſmitted, to the provincial governors; certifying the hopes of his ſpeedy recovery. Having paſſed the day, without unfavourable ſymptoms; and being viſited by the King of Navarre, whoſe unaffected condolence expreſſed the cordial emotions felt by him; he was left to the repoſe of night; when, quickly, the moſt alarming alteration enſued. His chief nobility and officers being now called in; and told by him, that the hour of his death was near; he exerted all the voice and ſpirit he had, in conjuring them to union amongſt themſelves; and to the ſupport of the declining monarchy. He declared Henry, King of Navarre, to be the only true and legitimate heir of the crown, and he required them, at his death, as they reſpected the royal dignity, to ſwear fealty and allegiance to him; as the lawful ſucceſſor to it. They are ſaid to have bended their knees, in teſtimony of their aſſent, and compliance with this laſt requeſt. He then called for the adminiſtration of the ſacred *viaticum*; and requeſted abſolution to be given him, by his confeſſor; which, upon a declaration of his faith, and ſubmiſſion to the Pope, he obtained. His laſt breath followed; when the King of

Which proves mortal.

His death. Auguſt 2.

* Ibid Matthieu. Thuan. Memoires de Sully.

of Navarre, early in the morning, preſented himſelf, again in the appartment, where he lay. 1589.

Such was the unhappy exit of Henry III.; the laſt of the family *des Valois*; a branch of the *Capetian* line, which had ſwayed the ſceptre of France, about two hundred and ſixty years. The thirty-ninth year of Henry's age, and ſome months more than the fifteenth of his reign, were completed at his death.

Character of King Henry III.

The ſurpriſing contraſt of his character, in early, and in riper years, has been obſerved. To him, the ſententious ſtricture of an antient hiſtorian, upon the character of a Roman Emperor, was applicable; "That he was worthy of a kingdom, if he had not aſcended the throne." The heroic qualities that ſo early vaniſhed in him, could not be deeply rooted. In no perſon, educated as a Prince, and in the prime of life, ſucceeding to a kingdom; did the private affections diminiſh, ſo much, the activity of thoſe of the public kind. His knowledge, his rules of policy, and his regard to juſtice, and order, were perſonal qualifications in him; little exerted in the ſphere of government. With a large ſhare of natural penetration, he was affable, courteous with dignity, eloquent, and graceful in his public addreſs; bountiful beyond expreſſion, mild, and unrigid, even with provocation; never revengeful, but in one act, nor chargeable with perfidy; but under the ſtrongeſt impreſſions of fear. Defective in the exertion of magnanimity, flexible, and unſteady in all his purpoſes, with a ſingular turn of mind, and manners, vicious in itſelf, degrading to his dignity, and uncongenial to the times in which he lived, and to the ſituation of his government; his other qualities availed not, to procure him the public love, or reverence of his ſubjects; and conciliated only the favour and affection of a few dependents. Unhappy in the choice of his confidents; improvident himſelf of the future, exerting his penetration, and

anxiety

BOOK II. 1589.

anxiety, only, about preſent difficulties, and forgetful of the paſt; the violence of faction, favoured by his imbecillities, roſe to a pitch, that, almoſt, drove him from his throne. Supported, at laſt, chiefly, by the party, which he had perſecuted; he fell a ſacrifice to that bigotry which he encouraged, and received the mortal blow from the hand of a votary of one of the cloiſtered tribes; which he had ſoothed, and cheriſhed, in an unprecedented manner. In various reſpects, the vices and faults of his character, as well as his infelicity, and his fate, were inſtructive to Princes. He died, when the prolongation of his life would have proved moſt advantageous to the ſtate; and, perhaps, more honourable to himſelf. At his death, the ſtate of affairs underwent a new, and more dangerous agitation.

Henry was tall, and erect in his perſon; majeſtic in his aſpect; which was grave, and rather affectedly ſolemn, in public. After ſome youthful exceſſes, injurious to a naturally healthful and firm conſtitution; he obſerved regularity, and moderation, in his diet and exerciſes, and by that means, preſerved his health *; a circumſtance, which, being reported by one who knew him, and vouched by other anecdotes, diſproves the allegation, and vulgar rumour, of his being addicted, habitually, to infamous ſcenes of private debauchery. Nothing is more to be doubted, than the ſlanders of the times of violent faction.

The neceſſary remarks on the political and civil adminiſtration of France, which belong to this reign, have been, fully, included in the ſeries of its hiſtory. The paſſage to a new reign requires the titular diſtinction of another book; but the intereſting criſis of the hiſtory admits of no digreſſion, from its general ſubject.

REIGN

* Thuan. lib. 96. p. 460.

THE HISTORY OF FRANCE.

REIGN OF HENRY IV.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

Parties of the State, upon Henry's Acceſſion to the Throne.——The Deſertion of various Chieftains, from his Army.——His Retreat into Normandy.——The Duke of Mayenne's Army repulſed by him, at Arques.——Suburbs of Paris aſſaulted by him.——Mayenne's Oppoſition, and Controul of the Spaniſh Party, in the League.——Henry's military Activity.——Famous Victory of Ivry gained by him.

1589. Auguſt 2.

NO Prince, whoſe actions are known from authentic hiſtory, ever acquired, by ſtruggling with difficulties, more of the heroic character, previous to his attainment of the royal dignity, and encountered, upon his ſucceſſion to it, a greater ſhare of hardſhips, than *Henry of Bourbon.*

He

Book III. 1589.

He had an undoubted right to the crown of France; being deſcended from Robert, Count of Clermont, youngeſt ſon of *St Lewis*. The family of *Bourbon-Vendôme*, was the neareſt collateral branch of the royal line, and Henry was the repreſentative of it.

The parties of the ſtate upon Henry's acceſſion.

While the catholic Princes, and nobles, lamented the fate of the deceaſed King, and vowed vengeance on * his murderers; his ſucceſſor, the King of Navarre, recommended to them, with his dying voice, was eyed, not with indifference alone, but, by many of them, with averſion and diſguſt †. Amongſt them, three parties were diſtinguiſhable; one, retaining the old tincture of catholic bigotry, perſuaded themſelves that neither their religion, nor their dignities would be ſafe, under the government of a Hugonot King. In this faction, appeared, the ſuperintendent of the finances, D'O, with Manou his brother, the Count d' Entragues, and Chateau-Vieux; who, being joined by D'Ampierre, the Camp-Marſhal, and the Duke of Longueville, choſe to place the latter at their head. Another diviſion of them conſiſted of the late King's domeſtics, too much indulged by him, not to diſreliſh the change of their maſter, and of various officers, and commanders; who deſired, rather, to wait the iſſue of the growing murmurs, and diſcontent, than to declare their attachment. The third party, profeſſing their obligation to ſubmit to Henry IV. as their legitimate Sovereign, and their diſpoſition to ſupport him, in aſſuming the ſceptre, were yet ſo far overawed by the commotions of the reſt, that they ſhowed leſs reſolution, and vigour, than ſuch a criſis of affairs required. Some of them, ſuch as the Marſhal Biron, who had moſt credit and authority in the army, inſtead of exerting it, ſeemed to behold, with little diſpleaſure, the embroiling of the ſcene of diſaffection; that the value of their ſervice, in compoſing it, might be the more inhanced

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 23.

† Thuan. tom. 5. lib. 97. p. 4.

hanced to Henry. Upon the whole, a gloomy ſuſpenſe from congratulation, or any expreſſions of ſatisfaction at the devolving of the crown to him, was diffuſed throughout the camp.

Henry uncertain what reſolution to follow;

In ſuch an emergency, no man's ſingle deliberation, or fortitude, could be truſted by him, as a ſufficient refuge. The few old friends that Henry could beſt confide in, for advice, might, not without reaſon, be ſuſpected of giving way to the impreſſions of fear; when this diſtraction aroſe in an army, where their catholic adverſaries were ſo much ſuperior to them *. It appears that ſome of the Hugonot chieftains thought it the wiſeſt courſe to be on their guard; and, without expoſing themſelves to a diſadvantageous rencounter, to draw off with their troops, to a more ſecure ſituation. One man, or two, of more clear, prudent, and reſolute judgement, concurred with Henry's own intrepid view of difficulties, to diſcover no marks of fear, or diffidence; but to make a direct eſſay, to engage the chief commanders of the army, to avow their loyalty and allegiance to Henry IV. D'Aubigné, as well as Sully, claims the particular honour of this advice; and De Thou aſcribes it to Guitri, whoſe character was no leſs worthy of it.

determines to diſcover no mark of diffidence of the catholic chiefs;

As experience has often ſhown, in a ſimilar ſituation of things; the difficult trial was found not practicable only; but to ſucceed, with a facility that was not to be expected. Biron, being requeſted by Henry, in a manner, which attributed that diſtinctive and ſingular merit to his ſervice, he wiſhed to be given it †, undertook to prevail with the Swiſs officers to take the oaths of fidelity to him. This was, in effect, already accompliſhed by the interpoſition of Sanci; who, with a ready zeal for the public intereſt, and a vigilance peculiar to him, had endeavoured to remove the objections

 ſtarted

* Mem. de Sully, ibid. Thuan. ibid. D'Aubigné, ibid.

Book III. ſtarted by the Swiſs Captains, about their obligation to wait the orders of their ſuperiors; and had gained their conſent to remain for two months, in Henry's army. The tranſaction itſelf being highly important, was rendered more ſo; by the encouragement and ſpirit it gave to the King's friends, and the example ſet to the French troops. The word began to be ſpread, that the King ought, without heſitation, to be acknowledged; and the moſt active loyaliſts excited others to offer their public homage to him.

1589. which produces a good effect.

It was impoſſible, however, that the cloud of diſaffection could be, ſo eaſily, diſpelled. It was not an army, upon which the natural ſentiments of loyalty could be ſuppoſed to work a ſudden effect. It was compoſed of troops, attached to their ſeveral chieftains, and that were entirely ſwayed, and directed, by them, in their behaviour. That party of the catholic nobility, which diſtinguiſhed themſelves, by the ardor of their zeal, for the ſecurity of their religion, were too ſenſible of the plauſibility, and alarming nature of their argument, to reſign it; without a ſtruggle. Having conferred amongſt themſelves, D'O was deputed their prolocutor to Henry. The terms in which he delivered himſelf, ſufficiently expreſſed the heat, and high tone of his party. "Moſt of the catholic nobles, he ſaid, would rather fall on their own ſwords, than ſuffer a diminution of the pre-eminent dignity of their antient religion; and he ſeemed to urge this topic ſo far, as to require Henry to turn Catholick upon the ſpot." The King, ſeveral times, changed colours at the harſh, and unſeaſonable propoſitions ſtated to him; but he recollected himſelf ſo, as to reply to them, with great propriety, and ſpirit. Givri came with the demeanour of loyalty, to intimate the addreſs of the well affected French nobility; which relieved Henry from this expoſtulation. Then the Swiſs Captains were introduced, upon their knees, to him.

But various catholic chieftains ſignify their diſaffection.

The

1589.

The King now took up his lodgings in St Cloud; near thoſe of the deceaſed Prince *. But his aſſumed veſtments of a violet colour, the French King's mourning, and the array of his attendants in black, did not reconcile the factious, and diſcontented party, to him. A numerous meeting of them was held; in which it was debated, whether to acknowledge him as Monarch of France, or to refer the determination of the point, until the ſtates-general were aſſembled. At laſt, conditions were propoſed to be ſigned by the King; which, affording vent to the breath of the moſt violent catholics, contributed to appeaſe them; and gave a face of unanimity and concord to Henry's acceſſion. Thoſe articles, chiefly, implied Henry's engagement, on the faith of a King, to maintain, without any innovation, the catholic religion, to exclude the public exerciſe of any other, except in the places poſſeſſed by the Hugonots, and to ſubmit his own converſion to the decree of a general or national council; to be held, if poſſible, within ſix months. But, what more diſcovered the jealous and intereſted aim of the party; the King obliged himſelf to promote none but catholicks to all dignities, and charges of the ſtate, and government, and to obſerve the ſame rule with reſpect to appointing governors of places taken from the enemy; with the exception of ſome caſes, mentioned in the treaty with the late King. Though ſome of thoſe conditions, and eſpecially the latter of them, could not fail to embarraſs Henry; concord was too eſſential, at ſuch a juncture, not to be purchaſed, under ſome diſadvantages. Being, without apparent ſcruple, ſubſcribed by the King; and the peers and nobles having annexed their ſignatures, to the obligation and vow of fealty; the ſcroll of the deed was, formally, regiſtered by the parliament, at Tours.

Conditions are propoſed by the factious;

which are agreed to by the King. Aug. 4.

The conſtrained appearance, manifeſted in this acknowledgment of Henry, was of worſe conſequence, than the tranſaction itſelf.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 7.

BOOK III.

1589.

The example, of deſerting the army, ſet by the Duke of Eſpernon,

The diſcontented were encouraged by it. The capricious and proud took the opportunity, it gave them, of ſhowing their importance. To ſuch, the Duke of Eſpernon ſet the firſt example; with all that moroſe and ſullen air of diſdain which was natural to his character *. He uſed the pretence, that his dignity, as a Peer, did not allow him to ſubſcribe the obligation of homage, below the Marſhals, Biron and d'Aumont; and, notwithſtanding Henry's expoſtulation with him; he withdrew with the whole body of his troops; which

being followed by many chieftains;

was conſiderable in number. The liberty of departure, aſked, or taken, by various catholicks, upon pretended ſcruples of conſcience, became frequent; and ſpread contagiouſly, like a general mutiny †. Even ſome proteſtant chiefs being, ſpitefully, told by D'O, and others of his party, that the King's engagement left them no hopes of ſharing the benefits of his government, were thrown into a gloomy fit of dejection, which made them plead their diſtance, from their native provinces, as an excuſe to retire. Henry, unable to ſtop this deſertion of the troops, either with the language of a maſter, or of a ſoldier, was forced to take his meaſures; under the

Henry is obliged to retreat to Normandy.

hard preſſure of ſuch an emergency. He granted leave, where he could not command; and, with that heroic reſolution, ſupported by him in paſt dangers; he endeavoured to give his march from Paris, when he ſought a ſhelter from the ſuperior power of his enemies, the appearance of an intended campaign, in Normandy, and of facilitating the acceſſion of the ſuccours he expected, from England. Having commiſſioned the Duke of Longueville to collect the troops of Picardy, and the Marſhal d'Aumont to aſſemble thoſe of Champaigne; he proceeded in his rout towards Roüen, at the head of, only, ſix or ſeven hundred horſe, three thouſand French infantry, and two Swiſs battalions. In ſetting out, the corpſe of the deceaſed King was eſcorted by him, to Compeigne; to be depoſited in the abbey of St Corneille.

Affairs

* Ibid.

† D'Aubigné, liv. 3. chap. 1.

1589.

Affairs in Paris wore an appearance totally different from this, of the King's camp. Congratulations of joy, and triumph, were expreſſed, at the aſſaſſination of the late King. The heart and hand of the parricide, were ſaid to be impelled and guided to the ſucceſsful blow, by an angel of heaven *. The event compared, by the preachers, to that of the ſlaughter of Holophernes, in his tent, was extolled as a deliverance to France; no leſs providential, than that ſignal one the Jews had met with. New hopes were conceived about the proſperous iſſue of the catholic confederacy; and new vows and obligations taken to promote the grand purpoſes and aims of it. Too wiſe not to perceive, how ſuch impreſſions, upon the people, would redound to the eſtabliſhment of his party; the Duke of Mayenne adapted the ſtrain of his public declarations to them. He wrote letters to the cities of the league, exhorting them, to recognize ſo remarkable an interpoſition of heaven, in behalf of their cauſe, and to act with unanimity and reſolution, ſuitable to the occaſion; when, the ſecret plot againſt their religion being fruſtrated, they were now called to combat their open, and avowed enemies †. His diſpatches to the Catholic King bore a ſollicitation to him, equally warm and importunate, for ſeaſonable aſſiſtance to that religious intereſt, ever held ſacred by him; and which he had for a long tract of time, to his great honour, ſupported in France. The procedure of the parliaments, of Bourdeaux and Thouloufe, ſhowed that his addreſſes of this kind were received with applauſe, in the provincial governments of the kingdom; and his own judicious conduct, and his cool, and unfluſhed temper, proved of ſingular advantage, for engaging the favour of the Spaniſh Monarch, and other catholic Princes. Inſtead of being moved, with the flattering offers of ſome of his chief partizans, to promote his own advancement to the throne, or being miſled by the precipitant inclination of others,

The joy of the Pariſians at the death of Henry III.

The Duke of Mayenne's prudent conduct,

* Satyre Menippée, Remarques, tom. 2. p. 332.

† Thuan. ibid. p. 11.

Book III. 1589.

others, to make a ſurrender of the crown to Philip II.; he prudently adhered to the political plan of his brother, the late Duke of Guiſe; and held forth the right of the Cardinal of Bourbon to the crown, which had been already, often defended in the kingdom; and aſſumed to himſelf, no other title of dignity, or rank, than that of Lieutenant-General of the ſtate; an office ſimilar to that granted to his brother, by Henry III.; and which, by the ſuffrages of the council of the union, had been conferred upon him. By means of this cautious, and, apparently, diſintereſted behaviour; he leſs provoked the envy of his equals; he made himſelf no object of ridicule, or animadverſion to the more rigid and cenſorious judges of his conduct; and he left room, ſtill, for ambitious Princes, ſuch as Philip II. to form hopes and projects, relative to their attainment of the crown; that might diſpoſe them to eſpouſe his quarrel, and intereſt, with vigour.

tends to ſtrengthen his party.

The acts and edicts of the parliament of the league in Paris, the decrees of the council of union, and the prayers and monitories of the church; all correſponded to this prudential arrangement of things, by the Duke of Mayenne. The Cardinal of Bourbon's acceſſion to the crown was authenticated, with all the formalities that could be uſed *. Pieces of money were coined, with the inſcription of the name of Charles X. The King of Navarre's title was reprobated and abjured; and, while, by his departure into Normandy, the avenues to Paris, from all quarters, were left open, the detached parties of the league flocked to this rendezvous of their main ſtrength. A large body of troops, commanded by the Duke of Nemours, marched from the Lioneſe. Another, more conſiderable in number, advanced, under the conduct of the Duke of Lorain's ſon, to meet the Duke of Mayenne; who, in caſe of his following

The Cardinal of Bourbon's ſucceſſion to the crown being declared by the league, in Paris, Auguſt 17.

its forces draw together;

* D'Aubigné, ibid, liv. 3. chap. 1.

lowing the King's rout, had alſo the proſpect of being joined by five hundred horſe, and ſome Walloon infantry; ſent to him by the Duke of Parma. In the firſt view of this unequal ſtrife, in the field, Henry, all-brave as he was, neglected not the counſels of prudence; but complied ſo far, with their dictates, as to propoſe an accommodation with the Duke of Mayenne. As this chieftain's moderate and cool temper formed ſo diſtinguiſhing a part of his character, and he could be ſuppoſed to entertain no perſonal hatred at Henry on account of the maſſacre of his two brothers; there was ſome ground to preſume, that he might hearken to reaſonable and advantageous terms of peace. But the trial, though made in the moſt plauſible way, by means of Villeroy, the late King's diſbanded ſecretary, produced no effect. The Duke thought himſelf too far engaged, in honour, to deſiſt; or, to allow of a treaty, that might bring him under ſuſpicion, with his party. Such is the courſe that muſt, generally, be followed by the beſt leaders of faction. They are obliged to act contrary to their diſpoſition, and character; as well as to their general principles. But Henry, as if it had been his inevitable fate, to be thrown, ever, upon the reſource of his valour, found no other refuge left him, at this juncture, to reſiſt the power of his enemies. When he ſaw the neceſſity, which his honour, enhanced by his royal dignity, laid him under, not to retreat out of a province, contiguous to the capital of the kingdom, and in which he expected the ſuccours of England, and the aid of ſome loyal towns; he determined to abide the worſt event of his fortune; with that calm and intrepid reſolution; which his long acquaintance with the greateſt dangers of the field, only, could inſpire.

and, though much ſuperior in number to the King's, Henry reſolves to wait for them.

In his expedition to the Lower Normandy he took ſome ſmall towns, got poſſeſſion of the Pont de l'Arche, on the Seine; and found the governor and garriſon of Dieppe loyal and ſubmiſſive

to

Book III.

1589. September.

to him *. But his troops were not increaſed to ſeven thouſand men; and it was known that the Duke of Mayenne, importuned by the Pariſians, to ſtrike ſome ſignal blow, was on his march into Normandy; with an army of more than thirty thouſand combatants. Henry had no other choice, but, either to ſhut himſelf up in the town of Dieppe, and expect to be, immediately, beſieged; or to think of encountering an enemy, in the field, whoſe forces were above four times the number of his own. The firſt reſolution he rejected, as inglorious, and hurtful to his reputation; and the danger of the other, which he rather preferred, he endeavoured to leſſen, by a contrivance worthy of his military ſkill and experience.

He entrenches his troops at Arques;

He found, at the village of Arques, about a league and a half from Dieppe, a tract of ground, which, from its contiguity to this village, and other natural advantages of its ſituation, was capable of being formed into a retrenchment for his ſmall army. Here he took poſt with his troops; and having cauſed every thing to be done, that military art could ſuggeſt, for their defence againſt an enemy ſo much ſuperior to them; he reſolved to wait the arrival of the Duke of Mayenne's forces. At firſt, this commander's deſign was to make himſelf maſter of Dieppe; that he might cut off Henry's communication with the ſea: For, upon accompliſhing this, he reckoned that, though Henry might fight a deſperate battle, he could

Septem. 15.

not, poſſibly, eſcape being killed, or taken priſoner. When, upon his approach, the King perceived his intention; he raiſed, with incredible induſtry, fortifications around the acceſſible parts of the ſuburbs; and, knowing the importance of the retreat of Dieppe, he committed the defence of its avenues to the brave Chatillon. After a fruitleſs attempt on that ſide; the Duke of Mayenne turned his army to the aſſault of the King's intrenchments. They were prepared, not for defence only, but for maintaining a combat with the enemy's

* Ibid. chap. 2.

1589.

enemy's ſquadrons of horſe or foot; that approached near to aſſail them. A thick fogg favoured the ſilent advancement of the Duke's forces, rendered uſeleſs the cannon of the caſtle of Arques; and an ignominious ſtratagem, till then unheard of, even amongſt the German ſtipendiaries, put a large party of them in poſſeſſion of the firſt retrenchment. A German Captain advanced, under leave to ſpeak to the King; and, with his ſpontoon pointed towards him, aſked him to ſurrender. To ſuch a criſis was Henry's fate, and that of the kingdom of France, brought on this eventful day. It is ſuperfluous to give the deſcription of the ſeveral aſſaults made by the Duke of Mayenne, and of the admirable proweſs, on the part of the King, and his troops; by which they were, from firſt to laſt, defeated. Mayenne's troops, which were moſt of them new levied, were by no means equal to the King's experienced veterans. Many of the officers of the former underſtood not their duty; but, in that body, which Henry commanded, the ſkill and addreſs of the Captains, and ſoldiers, in every military action, was no leſs remarkable, than their bravery. To this circumſtance, joined with that of the animating preſence and example of Henry, may be imputed the ſurpriſing repulſe of the Duke of Mayenne's forces, in the battle of Arques; with the loſs of ſeven hundred of his ſoldiers. It was in this action, as d'Avila reports *, that Henry, entangled among the enemy, and yet unwilling to turn his back, was heard to exclaim, "That France afforded not fifty gentlemen, who had reſolution enough, to die with their King."

Septem. 22. where, being attacked by the Duke of Mayenne;

he gives a ſignal repulſe to that General.

The Duke of Mayenne's ſubſequent attempt, by a feigned retreat, to ſurpriſe Henry, and throw his army between his camp and the town of Dieppe, was no leſs unſucceſsful †. The arrival of four thouſand Engliſh troops in that harbour, under the command of

Reinforced by a body of Engliſh troops; Septem. 28.

* Liv. 10. † Thuan. lib. 97. p. 16. Camden, B. 4. p. 436.

Book III. 1589.

Peregrine, Lord Willoughby, together with the advancement of the Duke of Longueville, the Marſhal D'Aumont, and the Count de Soiſſons, to the King's aid, diſappointed all his hopes of gaining any advantage; and obliged him to turn off towards Picardy, in order to meet with ſome auxiliary troops he expected from Flanders. No relief could be more ſeaſonable to Henry, than that of the Engliſh ſuccours; which was accompanied with the ſupply from Elizabeth, of 22,000 pounds ſterling; a ſum, in gold coin, larger than any, the King owned, he had ever ſeen collected together. It was this money that enabled Henry to retain the foreigners in his ſervice; and Elizabeth ſhowed her judgment, in accommodating her ſubſidy to the neceſſity of his affairs. Nothing is more unpolitical, than the partial and ſcanty ſuccour of an important ally. By the aſſiſtance Henry now received, new ſpirit was diffuſed amongſt his troops, which became numerous by the bodies of men, under the French chieftains, already named, being joined to them. Having, with ſome picked ſquadrons, followed the Duke of Mayenne, till he paſſed the river Somme, in Picardy; the King ſoon found his army in a condition to act offenſively, and even to attempt an enterprize that, in point of reputation, might compenſate for the reduced ſituation, in which, on his firſt acceſſion to the royalty in France, he had appeared. His reſolution was, to turn the ſtorm of war againſt the Pariſians, by marching up his troops to the gates of that city; which was the bulwark of the league; and had expected, from the falſe intelligence propagated amongſt the people, to behold him led captive by the Duke of Mayenne. This was effectuated by Henry, with an expedition and facility that augmented the fame and luſtre of the undertaking. In little more than a month, after his being aſſaulted in his camp at Arques; he appeared at the head of his army, within a league of Paris; and prepared for attacking, next day, all the quarters of the ſuburbs, on the ſouth ſide of the city.

and aſſiſted with a ſupply of money, by Q. Elizabeth;

October.

city *. It may be imagined, what the ſurpriſe of the Pariſians would be, to whom three ſtandards, taken by the treacherous Germans, from the King's troops, were ſent as trophies of the defeat given him; when his troops, ranged into three great diviſions, conducted by de Biron, d'Aumont, and La Noüe, advanced, all at once, to the entrenchments of the ſuburbs. Leſs than an hour ſufficed, to drive the tumultuary defenders from every quarter of them, that was inveſted. The armed, but unmilitary multitude, incapable of reſiſtence, fell in heaps before the King's ſoldiers; or were made priſoners, in crowds, by them. Eight hundred were ſlain, and a great number taken; with eleven enſigns, and ſeveral pieces of cannon. The advantage might have been puſhed to the forcing of the gates of the city; which the ſpeedy advancement of the artillery would have eaſily effectuated. But Henry knew how to reſtrain his martial ardor, in the midſt of victory; ſo as to fall into no miſcarriage †. He contented himſelf with having accompliſhed, almoſt without the loſs of a man, the point he had in view; and, while the Duke of Mayenne was advancing, by the oppoſite ſide, into the city, he ordered a retreat to be ſounded.

Henry makes an aſſault on the ſuburbs of Paris. October 31.

Contented with the advantage he had gained;

It is, alſo, moſt probable, that Henry deſired not to expoſe the metropolis of France, rebellious as it was, to the inſults and depredations of his army; compoſed of ſo great a number of foreign troops. His ſoldiers were repaid for their paſt labours, by the rich booty they found in the ſuburbs ‡; tho' the orders given, againſt the violation of the churches, and ſacred places, were ſo ſtrictly obſerved, that maſſes were performed, ſuitable to the feſtival of that day, in almoſt all of them. The retreat being made, in the greateſt order; Henry drew up his army in the line of battle, in the plain of Monrouge, fronting the city; that the Duke of Mayenne, now

 arrived

* Thuan. ibid. p. 17. † Mem. de Sully, liv. 3. ‡ D'Avila, ibid.

Book III.

1589.

arrived with part of his troops, might have the opportunity, if he choſe it, to enter the liſts with him, in the open field. But this chieftain, declining any combat; the King proceeded with his army to inveſt Eſtampes; which being quickly taken by him, and ſeveral other towns and caſtles, in Beauſſe; he continued his rout to the city of Tours. His re-entrance into this well affected place, after ſuch unexpected ſucceſs, was rendered doubly agreeable to him, by the appearance of Mocenigo, the *Venetian* ambaſſador, whom the republic had commiſſioned to compliment him on his acceſſion to the crown of France *. The juſt diſcernment, and ſagacity, by which the ſenators of Venice were always diſtinguiſhed, directed them to take this ſtep; in oppoſition to the remonſtrances of the envoys of Spain, the Emperor, and the Pope. They wiſely perceived that the preſervation of the French monarchy, undiſmembered, was of the utmoſt conſequence to the maintenance of the political balance of Europe; which was then in extreme danger from the overgrown power of the houſe of Auſtria; and they were ſenſible that Henry of Navarre, beſides his juſt title to the crown of France, had theſe heroic qualities, which gave the beſt aſſurance of his being able to recover, in time, the kingdom from its depreſſed, and embroiled ſtate. Henry was the more pleaſed with this addreſs, paid him by the Venetian ſenate; as it might ſerve to incite other catholic ſtates, to a like acknowledgement of him. It was, likewiſe, very remarkable, in what manner the populace of Venice behaved on this occaſion †. As if they had been, deeply, concerned in Henry's intereſt; they waited with the utmoſt impatience, at the palace of St Mark, for the determination of the ſenate, with reſpect to this meaſure. When it was made known, the joy, and exultation, they expreſſed, was moſt extraordinary. Having found a mouldy portrait, that was ſaid to be done for this Prince, or to reſemble him; they carried it about

he withdraws his army to Tours. Novem. 21.

Favour of the Venetian republic for Henry;

and the fond applauſe of the populace for his character.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 28.

† Ibid.

1589.

about the ſtreets, in triumph. Preſently, all the limners were employed, in copying the effigy; which, however coarſely imitated, was ſold every where, in the city; and fixed up in many public places. Such was the popular admiration of Henry's character for bravery, in a foreign country; while, in France, by an unnatural perverſion of the minds of the people, in all other inſtances captivated with valour; his gallant actions, ſo well known to them, had inconſiderable influence, in engaging their favour.

Inſtead of inſiſting on the detail of Henry's particular exploits at this time, or making a digreſſion to the combats in the ſouthern provinces, where Leſdiguieres, and the Duke of Eſpernon, waged war with the partizans of the league; it is more important, and entertaining, to attend to the different aims and views of the chief conſtituents of the catholic confederacy. What, ſoon after, paſſed in Paris, leads to an explication of them. Pope Sixtus, perſuaded, by the envoys of the league, that every thing ſucceeded to their wiſhes, would ſcarce, on any footing, admit to an audience the Duke of Luxembourg, deputed to him by the catholic princes, and nobles; who had ſubmitted to the King *. His appointment of Cardinal Cajetan to execute the function of his legate in France, was a proof that he was altogether directed by the Spaniſh party; to whoſe intereſt that prelate was entirely devoted. He even believed that the nomination of a King of France, would be left to himſelf. By this time, the Duke of Mayenne became ſenſible that the Spaniſh agents in Paris, were growing in credit and authority amongſt the faction of the ſixteen, and the council of the union. Many of the former being gained over by Philip's ambaſſador Mendoza; the Duke ſaw that his own intereſt would ſoon be diminiſhed, or rendered inſignificant, by ſuch prevalence of the Spaniſh intrigues. His ſentiments

Conduct of Sixtus Quintus upon Henry's acceſſion to the crown.

* Ibid. lib. 98. p. 45. D'Avila, liv. xi.

BOOK III. 1589.

ments as a Frenchman, alſo diſpoſing him to diſreliſh this uſurpation of intereſt in the kingdom, by a foreign power; he endeavoured, by ſeveral artificial meaſures, which concealed his intention, to reſtrain it. With this view, before the arrival of Cajetan, he took care to have the Cardinal of Bourbon, formally, proclaimed King of France; and to get his own authority, as Lieutenant of the crown, confirmed. He ſhowed, yet, more addreſs, in evading a moſt enſnaring propoſition, that was made by Mendoza, in concert with ſome of his creatures, in the general council of the union. It was moved there, that his Catholic Majeſty, in recompence for all the ſervices he had done to the catholic intereſt in France, ſhould be honoured with the title of *Protector* of the kingdom; and, that he ſhould be empowered to ſupply the chief offices and poſts of the crown. Beſides all the ſoothing arguments that were uſed in behalf of Philip's merit, with the kingdom; a ſketch of his propoſals was drawn out; much calculated to dazzle the minds of the generality of people, and to impoſe upon the more conſiderate. In caſe of the deceaſe of the Cardinal of Bourbon; he propoſed that his daughter ſhould eſpouſe a prince of the blood of France, who ſhould be advanced to the throne; and that the County of Flanders, or Burgundy, ſhould be given up, by him, as the marriage-dowry. He engaged that not one Spaniard ſhould be promoted to any of the benefices, offices of judicature, or to governments of importance, in the realm. He offered to conſign a fund of two millions of piſtoles, for diſcharging the incumbrances of the revenues of Paris; and to open, to the French, the free trade to Peru, and his other American conqueſts. Such were the alluring baits, held forth, in Philip's name, by Mendoza, in order to carry his point. Too ſplendid, and deluſive, to be truſted by the more wary and penetrating; they failed not to make the deſired impreſſion upon many of the conſtituents of the council of the league *. At a loſs, in ſome meaſure,

Novemb. 21.

From Mayenne's ſuſpicions of the power of the Spaniſh faction;

* D'Avila, ibid. P. Daniel, tom. 9. p. 451.

1589.

meaſure, what judgment was to be formed of thoſe offers, and much more how to oppoſe what was ſo popular, and yet ſuſpicious to him; the Duke of Mayenne is ſaid to have conſulted Villeroy, the Secretary, upon the premiſſes. He was confirmed in his apprehenſions of the inſidious tendency of the project, by the latter; who declared it to be utterly diſhonourable, and unſafe for the kingdom. To defeat the motion about it; Villeroy was prevailed on to come to the council, and deliver his opinion. The face put on the oppoſition to it was, that ſuch a meaſure ought not to be determined, until the arrival of the Pope's legate. When he appeared, the procedure about it was totally ſuppreſſed by a ſpecious ſubterfuge uſed by the Duke of Mayenne; who declared it to be his ſentiment, that his Holineſs, alone, ſhould be dignified with the title of Protector of the catholic confederacy, in France. None could refuſe to admit of this orthodox deciſion. The eccleſiaſtics, who bandied with Mendoza, were obliged to adhere to it; and the legate could not avoid ratifying it, by his ſanction. Such was the concluſion of one of the artificial projects of the Spaniſh Monarch, to turn the combuſtion of France to his advantage. It ſerved to open the eyes of others, as well as of the Duke of Mayenne, with reſpect to his deſigns, when they reflected, duly, on the political conſequences of that protection of the embroiled ſtate, which was, ſo eagerly, ſollicited by him.

he is excited to reject or fruſtrate the inſidious propoſals of the Catholic King.

It was the more ſurpriſing, that the Duke of Mayenne was capable of defeating, in this manner, the intrigues of Spain; at a time, when his late unſucceſsful management of the war, againſt the King, had rather obſcured his reputation, and cooled the affections of the Pariſians towards him. Yet he ſtopped not here; but accompliſhed, what was ſtill a bolder undertaking; the reduction of the Pariſian council of the league. The diſtaſte of the Spaniſh ambition, which was excited in the minds of ſome of the magiſtrates, and

Mayenne ſhows his great ſpirit and reſolution;

Book III. 1589.

and of the more judicious citizens, enabled him to make this effort*; which was become highly requiſite, in order to free himſelf from the domination of the junto of the ſixteen; which ſtill prevailed in that council. He uſed it as an argument for this meaſure, that a council, conſiſting of ſo large a number of conſtituents, was unſuitable to that monarchical government, to which they owned themſelves ſubject, under Charles X.: And that one, leſs numerous, could only be neceſſary, and uſeful to him; who, by his military office, and employment, was, often, obliged to long abſence from Paris. Having the aſſiſtance of the Archbiſhop of Lyons, who had, lately, procured his releaſe from captivity, as well as of the Cardinal Gondi, and other leading men; the Duke procured the abolition of the democratical council of the union; and ſubſtituted a ſmall one in its room; compoſed of men of rank, and character, in the late reign. When it is remembered that Mayenne, from a ſimilar motive, had propoſed, himſelf, the enlargement of the number of the council; this ſtroke of policy, in him, muſt be owned a moſt maſterly one. Its tendency to break the coheſion of the members of the general league through the kingdom, is no leſs obſervable; in which view, the King's friends are ſaid to have rejoiced at the report of it, as a propitious event. To palliate ſuch a meaſure, an aſſembly of the ſtates of the kingdom was indicted, in the name of Charles X. to meet in the month of February, at Melun.

by aboliſhing the council of the union in Paris.

To point out, yet further, the political ſchemes and projects of the heads of the league, and its auxiliary princes; it may be proper to obſerve, that all of them carried on their views, to the expected deceaſe of the Cardinal King; or his arbitrary removal from the embroiled ſcene; in which he had neither ability, nor will, to take any ſhare. Without regard to the phantom of his royalty, the Catholic

* Preuves de la Satyre Menippée, tom. 3. p. 483.

1589.

tholic King, the Duke of Lorain, and the Duke of Savoy, together with the Duke of Mayenne, entertained, each of them, their ſeparate hopes and views of rendering their intereſt ſo far predominant; as to obtain, either, the largeſt portion, or a conſiderable one, of the diſunited, and falling monarchy. Allied, by the female ſide, to the royal line of Valois, extinct in the late King; they thought thoſe titles might be of ſome avail, to procure them particular favour, and preference to others, in the future election of a King of France. Philip II. maintained the claim of the Infanta, his daughter; whoſe mother, Elizabeth, was ſiſter to Henry III. The Duke of Lorain's pretenſions, in favour of his ſon, the Marquis of Du Pont, were the ſame; and Savoy preſumed that he had the advantage of them both, by his being the iſſue of a ſiſter of Henry II. Without explaining his particular views of grandeur; the Duke of Mayenne purſued that plan which, in all events, ſeemed moſt proper to eſtabliſh his own intereſt and authority, in the confederacy of the catholicks of the kingdom. Jealous of the Spaniſh King's interference with him, in this intereſt; and, at the ſame time, deſirous of that powerful ſupport, which he could afford; he conducted his political meaſures with a degree of ſpirit, that, joined to his natural prudence, proved advantageous to his credit and influence; during the various colliſions of the parties, in the civil war.

Particular views entertained by the chiefs of the league.

1590. January.

Againſt Henry, however, thoſe different competitors for aſcendency, and precedence, in the catholic confederacy, appeared to be amicably, and ſtrictly, united. The pretext of religion being common to them all, and the intereſt they had, in his overthrow, of no leſs general concern; their zeal and activity, in oppoſing him, were not abated. The briefs iſſued by Cajetan *, the manifeſto publiſhed by Philip, the arrets of the parliament, and the new decrees of the Sor-

Combination of the catholic partizans againſt Henry ſupported by the Pope's legate.

* Thuan. lib. 98. p. 49.

BOOK III. 1590.

bonne, at Paris, expreſſed, more or leſs vehemently, the language of antipathy and deteſtation of his pretenſions to the ſovereignty of France. The efficacy of theſe publications was combated, on Henry's ſide, by ſeveral arrets of the parliament of Tours; in which a few of the moſt eminent men of the robe diſplayed their abilities; by defending the injured honour of their King, of the laws, and their country. But Henry, obliged to ſeek more effectual redreſs, in the field of honour, had ſhown what, upon the late increaſe of his forces, he was able, in a ſhort time, to perform. The campaign being unſuſpended by him, through the winter; it was ſurpriſing *, to the oldeſt and hardieſt warriours; to obſerve the rapid and various conqueſts made by him. In ſeven weeks of an inclement ſeaſon, he traverſed a hundred and fifty leagues of hoſtile country; in which, at almoſt every incampment of his troops, ſome aſſault, or petty ſiege, was undertaken, or ſome repulſe given to the enemy. In theſe military toils, the Engliſh troops took an honourable ſhare; having, as both the French and Engliſh hiſtorians agree; diſtinguiſhed their valour, in the reduction of many places, and performed a winter-expedition, of more than five hundred miles, before their diſmiſſion. Henry had, by this time, almoſt wholly ſubdued the ſtrength of the league, in Normandy, and Maine; when the ſurrender of Pontoiſe, to its general, and the ſiege of Meulan undertaken by him, recalled the King to the interior parts of the kingdom. After obliging the enemy to retire from Meulan, he reſolved to beſiege the town of Dreux. Scarce had he begun this enterpriſe, when intelligence came that the Duke of Mayenne, reinforced with a large body of troops, from Flanders †; directed his march towards him; and had paſſed his army, by the bridge, over the Seine, at Mante.

Henry's amazing activity in the field;

and the reputation of his Engliſh auxiliaries.

February 14.

March.

A

* D'Aubigné, liv. 3. chap. 5. Camden, B 4. p. 436. † D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 6.

1590.

A general engagement with the much augmented army of the league, when Henry's was diminiſhed by the diſmiſſion of the Engliſh, and had been harraſſed with the fatigues of a winter-campaign; ſeemed to be no eligible reſolution. A retreat into Normandy was open to his troops; where the conqueſts the King had made, enabled him to throw many obſtacles in the way of the enemy. But, finding the Duke of Mayenne advanced upon him, like one conſcious of his ſuperiority in the field; Henry heſitated not a moment, about his determination. "There is no diſhonour, ſaid he, to his Captains, in raiſing a ſiege, in order to fight a battle." As if they had all been poſſeſſed of equal ardor with him; this intimation of his purpoſe was heard with approbation, and alacrity *. The troops marched from Dreux, in that order, which correſponded to their forming a line of battle; ſketched out by Henry himſelf, and given to his officers. The Duke of Mayenne's ſcouts informing him, that they were entered the plain of Ivry, and had ſeized the very ground which he meant to occupy, at his next encampment; that General, remembering the valour of the King's troops at Arques, began to be more diffident of the iſſue of this combat with them. But his reputation was, now, ſo much at ſtake, that he could not decline an engagement; which the commander of the Spaniſh auxiliaries, Count Egmont, urged with an impetuoſity approaching to inſolence. This young nobleman, who ſpurned his father's illuſtrious name, as that of a rebel, was preſumptuous enough to declare, "That he would fight and vanquiſh the King with his own troops only."

Henry inferior in troops quits the ſiege of Dreux;

to engage with the Duke of Mayenne.

When the number of combatants, on each ſide, was eſtimated; the preſumption of victory, indeed, belonged to that of the league †. Its army exceeded thirteen thouſand men; five thouſand of which

Circumſtances of the armies previous to the battle of Ivry;

* Ibid. D'Aubigné. Thuan. lib. 98. p. 51. † D'Auigne, ibid.

Book III. 1590.

were cavalry; who, often, decided the fate of the fields of battle in the civil wars. In the beginning of the action, the King's troops amounted, only, to two thouſand horſe, and about ſix thouſand infantry. Yet Henry would not allow the ardor of his ſoldiers to cool, by waiting the arrival of d'Humieres, and Mouy; who were quickly, expected with ſome reinforcements. The high ſpirit, the proved valour, and diſcipline of his troops, were what he truſted in; more than in the addition of a few ſquadrons. His own attention, and true judgment of every thing relative to the military art, was, alſo, a reaſonable ground of aſſurance of ſucceſs, to his ſoldiers in the day of the battle. He ſignalized it remarkably, by a new arrangement of his troops in the field of Ivry *. His whole cavalry was divided into ſeven ſquadrons, flanked, each of them, by battalions of foot; a diſpoſition, which a change in the weapons of his gendarmerie, that had inſenſibly taken place, rendered extremely neceſſary. They, no longer, uſed lances in the combat, but fought with large piſtols, like the German Rheiters, and with light cutting ſwords. Having, now, to encounter the Flemiſh cavalry, who retained their ſpears; they muſt have been expoſed to great diſadvantage; without this ſkilful precaution; which Henry employed, to balance it. The lines of foot, by their fire, ſerved to diſorder the career of the horſemen, with their lances; before thoſe of the King made their attack upon them, in deep ſquadrons, like a wedge. By their expertneſs, in regular movements, Henry made his troops wheel, in the face of the enemy, to throw the ſun and wind behind them. With all this exertion of military addreſs, his fortune, and that of the kingdom, was ſufficiently hazarded in this battle, with the adverſe army; in which, beſides its ſuperior numbers, near five thouſand of the Duke of Parma's beſt troops were ranged againſt him.

which is fought; March 14. Wedneſday.

When Henry had, thus, performed the part of an able commander; he, next, addreſſed himſelf to his captains, and officers, as their

* Thuan. ibid. p. 53. D'Avila, liv. xi.

their King, who placed all his hopes of victory, in their invincible valour, and ardent affection to his ſervice, and that of their country. "I have provided no retreat for you, my brave friends, ſaid he, but the field of battle. You are that gallant French nobleſſe, to whoſe honour your Kings have, always, truſted their ſafety. I have now, and I deſire, no other pledge of ſucceſs." His behaviour to Schomberg, the general of the German troops, was a noble example of his juſt and generous ſenſibility, and of the goodneſs of his heart; ever ready to correct the eſcapes of its fire *. This officer, a few days before, had demanded pay for his troops; which the King could, by no means, furniſh. "No brave man, replied Henry, in ſome heat, calls for money, in the eve of a battle." Upon the ſight of Schomberg, now, in his place of duty; Henry recollected his ſevere reprimand: "Let me embrace you, ſaid he to Schomberg; for, if I die to-day, I may, unjuſtly, deprive you, who are a man of worth and honour, of his valuable name." Schomberg, quite overwhelmed, made anſwer, with the manly tear ſtarting in his eye: "Ah, Sire, you have reſtored me my honour, in ſuch a manner, as will coſt me my life. To day it will, undoubtedly, be ſacrificed in your ſervice." This generous declaration was fulfilled, by Schomberg's fall in the battle. Upon ſuch critical occaſions, in the field, Henry's powers, of warming the hearts, and whetting the courage of his officers and ſoldiers, perhaps, exceeded thoſe of any of the moſt celebrated commanders. Every air of magnanimity, and valour, attractive to military men, was ſeen, ſerene, and bright, in all his looks, and motions. When he took his helmet, with a large creſt of white plumes, that might be ſeen at a diſtance, he ſaid, "If your enſigns ſhould fail you, my friends; let this be your guide; which, I truſt, you will find leading the way to honour, and victory."

The

* L'Eſprit de la ligue, ou hiſtoire politique des troubles de France, oct. edit. a Paris, tom. 3. p. 112.

Book III. 1590.

The King's line of battle bended, a little, from the ſtraight; and that of the Duke of Mayenne's formed a deeper curve *. It was the cavalry, on both ſides, which was, principally, engaged; and, on the right, where Henry's own troop ſtood, the ſhock of twelve hundred lances, headed by Count Egmont, was to be ſuſtained by that body, which did not exceed ſix hundred horſemen. In the firſt conflict, the King's ſtandard was ſeen to waver, and fall a-ſide. One with a white creſt, like Henry's, was obſerved to be hurried along with the rout. From an accident to his ſtandard-bearer, and this other appearance; the King's death was feared. To diſſipate the growing diſmay, Henry was forced to ſhow himſelf, in various battalions. When the victory was near gained by his troops, in every part of the field; the firſt rumour had ſpread, over all the left wing of his army; and was the more credited, from his not appearing to direct the purſuit. The victors ſtood motionleſs; eyeing one another, with anxious, and fallen looks. Henry, who had been detained by a new danger, to which the too great eagerneſs of his troop, to purſue the enemy, expoſed him; came up in this gloomy interval. Being informed of the diſquiet his diſappearance had occaſioned; he rode inſtantly into the midſt of the plain, diſfigured, as he was with duſt, and ſtains of blood, and waved his ſword in the air. At the ſight of him, the loudeſt acclamations of *Vive le Roy!* began, and run, in repeated peals, over the whole army. In that moment, Henry felt the moſt lively emotions of joy, for his victory; but he expreſſed them in a manner worthy of himſelf; by calling out, "to ſave the French."

and, by Henry's eminent conduct and valour;

memorable victory is obtained.

Purſuit of the flying army;

The purſuit of the flying enemy, tho' with ſome delay, was, now, ordered. To evade the danger of being overtaken with his general officers; the Duke of Mayenne, fatally for a great number of

* D'Aubigné, ibid.

1590.

of his diſſipated ſquadrons, barricaded the village of Ivry; and then broke down the bridge over the Eure; after he had paſſed it. Here the throng of the fugitives was ſuch, that they attempted a deſperate, but unavailing reſiſtence. A carnage, exceeding that of the battle, was made among the Germans; who, according to their manner, in the laſt reſource of deſpair, cut the hams of their horſes, and formed a breaſt-work of their bodies. Plunging into the hazardous ford of the river; many were ſwept down its current, or periſhed in its gulphs of ſand *. The ſlaughter, and loſs, of the vanquiſhed army, was computed, to more than ſix thouſand men; and, by the ſubſequent diſperſion of the fugitives, ſcarce one fourth of it was believed to have remained. All the baggage, colours, and cannon, fell into the hands of the victors. With difficulty did the Duke of Mayenne, and his few attendants, prevail on the garriſon of Mante, though friendly to the league, to open its gates to him; and, without a reception into the town, his retreat, over the Seine, was cut off; as Henry ſoon conducted the purſuit to its walls.

and the loſs ſuſtained by it.

Such a general review of the circumſtances of the memorable battle of Ivry, could not be omitted, in the hiſtory of the reign of Henry IV.; who, from the renown of the great victory he obtained in it, and a train of ſucceſs and ſuperiority over his adverſaries, into which it led, may be ſaid, in conſequence of it, to have fixed the crown of France upon his head.

* D'Avila, ibid.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Henry's army advanced to Paris.——The Siege, and obſtinate Reſiſtence of the City.——Its Relief, by the Duke of Parma.——His Retreat, into Flanders, harraſſed by Henry.——Affairs of the remoter Provinces.——Advancement of Gregory XIV. *to the Pontificate; and his Fulminations againſt Henry.——Intrigues of the Third Party in the Court.——Diſcord of the Leaguers; and the Rage of the Sixteen.——Siege of Roüen by Henry.——Return of the Duke of Parma into France.——His Campaign; and difficult Retreat.*

Book III. 1590.

IN almoſt any other circumſtances, than thoſe in which Henry IV. contended with adverſe fortune; ſuch a victory as that of *Ivry*, would have been ſufficient, to have produced a total revolution of affairs; and put a period to his toils, and the convulſions of the kingdom. The league, without an army, to oppoſe him in the field; its chief, forced to fly for ſhelter, to Paris; and other inſtances of ſucceſs, which, at this juncture, attended his arms in ſeveral provinces; were advantages, that, in the management of ſuch a Prince, appeared deciſive in his favour *. Active to proſecute them, with all poſſible expedition; Henry, after the ſurrender of Mante, Vernon, and Dreux, marched, with his victorious army, towards Paris. Before his arrival in that neighbourhood; it was increaſed to fourteen thouſand foot, and about two thouſand five hundred cavalry.

Some time being loſt after the victory;

The elapſe of more than ſix weeks, before Henry was able to complete the blockade of the capital, had not only abated the conſternation of the league, upon the defeat of the Duke of Mayenne; but

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 7.

but allowed time to the Pariſians to recover from their ſurpriſe, and to prepare for his expected approach. This unſeaſonable delay, that cannot be charged upon Henry himſelf, is attributed to a moſt unhappy cauſe; the coolneſs *, or, rather, the alienation of ſeveral of the late King's miniſters, from his ſervice; whoſe avarice, co-operating with their diſlike of him, as a Hugonot, induced them to embezzle his ſcanty finances; and to keep him in conſtant ſtraits, and in mean dependence upon themſelves. The pay of the foreign troops, the ſupplies of the artillery, and ammunition to his army, created demands of money; which, being unſatisfied, interrupted the progreſs of the campaign, and protracted the ſieges of places, and other undertakings neceſſary to it. While the army advanced towards Paris; ſeveral conferences ſet on foot, in an indirect way, by the chief miniſters of the league, were, alſo, perhaps, too much indulged by Henry, and his principal officers. Though any appearance of the pacific temper, may be reckoned advantageous to Henry; yet the manner, as well as the ſeaſon †, in which it was now ſhown, rendered it ſuſpicious. In one interview, the King himſelf was not addreſſed: In another, there was neither commiſſion, nor power given, to treat with him. It appeared, that the legate Cajetan, in his conference with the Marſhal Biron, at Noiſſi, meant, only to amuſe the victorious party, and to ſound the inclinations of the catholic chiefs, about the King. Villeroy's private embaſſy to Henry, may admit of a better conſtruction, with reſpect to the ſecretary's own intentions; but, not in reference to the views of thoſe, who permitted him to negotiate.

Henry advances with his army towards Paris.

In the mean time; nothing was left undone, by the miniſters, and agents of the league, in Paris, to work up the minds of the people, to obſtinate perſeverance in their antipathy to all propoſals

Arguments and exhortations uſed by the clergy.

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 4.

† Thuan. lib. 98. p. 61.

Book III. 1590.

of accommodation, with an excommunicated prince. To former doctrines, about the impiety of them, it was now ſubjoined, as an eſtabliſhed one, in the catholic canons *; that a relapſed heretick, ſuch as Henry was, had, irrecoverably, forfeited all privileges of divine, or human right, to his ſucceſſion to the royalty; and that his ſuppoſed converſion, and abſolution, could not be effectual to reſtore them. Accuſtomed to hear, with profound veneration, the mandates of their ghoſtly inſtructors; the populace made no queſtion of the infallibility of this ſtatute, and the logical reaſoning of the diſciples of the Sorbonne ſufficed to convince, or impoſe ſilence, on the more intelligent. The expiatory and beneficial uſe of ſufferings, in the cauſe of religion, was inculcated from the pulpits; and, by repeated warnings to prepare, for what they feared, but did not feel; the minds of the people were, gradually, hardened to endure a calamity, of which they neither conceived the miſery, nor the extent. In ſupport of the principle of unſubmitting and reſiſtive zeal; the Pope's legate, the prelates, of the firſt order, the ambaſſador and emiſſaries of Spain; together with the indefatigable council of the ſixteen partizans; exerted themſelves, ſtrenuouſly, in their different capacities. The young Duke of Nemours, appointed governor of Paris, by his uterine brother, the Duke of Mayenne, uſed all that diligence, which a ſenſe of the honour conferred on him, could inſpire; in repairing the ramparts, planting them with cannon, and ſtrengthening the garriſon of the city †. Not only the largeſt ſtores of grain, of every kind that could be got, and of wines, were collected and brought to Paris; but, from an opinion, that ſcarcity of proviſion was more to be dreaded than the aſſaults of the enemy, an inventory was made of all the corn; and proper regulations were framed for the more parſimonious conſumption of it, by the people. The price of bread was fixed; and,

to inſpire the Pariſians with zealous reſolutions.

to

* Ibid. p. 68. Satyre Menippee, tom. 1. p. 392. † Satyre Menippee, ibid.

to encreaſe the funds of the city for the purchaſe of it, the legate conſented to the impawning the plate of the churches; till the ſiege was raiſed. The donatives of the rich, and their larger promiſes, to the poorer ſort, joined with aſſurances of the Duke of Mayenne's ſpeedy return with ſuccours, confirmed the reſolution of the weakeſt; and cauſed a general defiance of the hardeſt warfare, with the enemy, and famine.

Death of the Cardinal of Bourbon. May 9.

In this elevated condition of the minds of the Pariſians; the incident of the Cardinal of Bourbon's death, which happened, at this time, made no alteration in the ſyſtem of the league. Supported on another baſis, than the nominal one of his royalty; its partizans ſtill found their centre of union, and coherence *. Though the letters that came from Sixtus Quintus, fell ſhort of their former ſtrain of approbation of the league; they were not much diſconcerted. They had recourſe to their oracle of the Sorbonne; which Bellarmine the Jeſuite, Panigarola, Biſhop of Aſt, and other attendants of the legate, allowed to be of, almoſt, equal authority, with the apoſtolic one. Its formal decree, in the terms already mentioned, huſhed all diſputes; and, with the corroborative arret of the parliament, adjuſted the motley frame of their political adminiſtration; by declaring the power of the Duke of Mayenne, and his ſubſtitutes, to be legitimate. The ſolemn oaths renewed, and the public proceſſions made, to the churches and altars, gave a venerable ſanction to the whole. But the eyes of the people, under all the power of religious faſcination, hardly reliſhed a moſt extraordinary ſpectacle, of this kind, prepared for them. It was a numerous proceſſion of the Capuchins, Feuillants, Paulins, Franciſcans, Dominicans, and others of the moſt auſtere orders of monks; in the equipage of a military corps. Nothing could exceed the ridicule of a ſhow ſo

Burleſque proceſſion of the Monkiſh orders in Paris. June 3.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 58 and 69.

Book III. 1590.

completely burleſque. With cuiraſſes above their frocks, helmets over their cowls; they carried pikes, halberts, and muſkets of ſundry ſizes, in the moſt fantaſtic manner; while the looks, and geſtures of ſuch men, with the grimace of warriors, gave additional force to the deriſive extravagance of their aſpect. From this lively picture of the burleſque; it is probable, that the author of the ſatyre Menippée might collect the firſt ideas of his ſubject.

Probability, that the ſiege of Paris might have been ſucceſsful.

With all the parade of its defenſive power; if Paris had been either ſooner attacked, or when begirt by Henry's forces, if it had been, more vigorouſly aſſaulted by him; it was the opinion of ſeveral intelligent commanders, that the city muſt have ſurrendered to him *. Its garriſon of regular troops did not exceed eight thouſand men; and as for the boaſted multitude of its militia bands, called 50,000, not above a fifth of them could be ſuppoſed fit for action, or capable of doing the ordinary duty of ſoldiers. In a city of ſuch wide circumference, many weak and defenceleſs places would have been found. But the military ideas, with reſpect to the powers of a beſieging army, were not, at that period, raiſed ſo high; and Henry's train of artillery was not capable of much improvement. The general, and firm opinion, that Paris, cut off from all its ſupplies, by the rivers, and land, around it, could not, poſſibly, hold out, above a month, determined Henry to confine his operations, altogether, to the blockade of the city. As the King was well aſſured that ſufficient ſuccours from Flanders, if obtained by the Duke of Mayenne, could not arrive, within double that ſpace of time; he, more eaſily, acquieſced in this reſolution. His own ſentiments, alſo, diſpoſing him to act the conqueror in France, with the affectionate feelings of her natural King; he reſtrained all the fire of reſentment, and the hurry of impatience; while he hoped to

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 7.

to reduce, in a few weeks, the deluded Pariſians, to a ſubmiſſion; without expoſing them to the depredations, and outrages of his victorious ſoldiers.

That the numerous populace of Paris, more diſſolute than thoſe of ſmaller towns, would abide the ſcourge of famine, like the Hugonot garriſon of Sancerre; ſeemed highly incredible. To ſuppoſe them capable of ſuch obdurate reſolution, when offered the beſt conditions of ſafety and protection, by the King; yet more exceeded belief. But, however contradictory to common reaſon; this phaenomenon was diſplayed in the progreſs of the ſiege. Upon the obſtruction of all carriages, with the moſt neceſſary proviſions; they took little alarm. The defeat of all attempts, to deceive the vigilance of the beſiegers, and procure clandeſtine ſupplies; excited no tumult. They heard, without murmuring, the prohibitions publiſhed, on pain of immediate death, againſt all motions, or ſpeeches, for a treaty with Henry. They received the daily diminiſhed portions of bread; as if nature could comply with the preſcriptions of their ſuperiors. When the granaries *, within the city, were exhauſted, and the money diſtributed by the Spaniſh ambaſſador, and other grandees, amongſt the pooreſt claſs of them, could not purchaſe a pittance of bread; they dreaded to exclaim, "That money could not nouriſh them." Several thouſands of them, now expelled, as inhabitants of the country, diſcovered to the beſieging army the dreadful ſtraits of the city. Henry found natural humanity revolt againſt the execution of his own orders. The rules of war were, in vain, inſiſted upon, by ſome unrelenting commanders; to prompt him to the exerciſe of what they called, neceſſary rigour. He allowed crowds of theſe forlorn people to paſs his guards, and lines; and many of his officers ſoon learned to turn this indulgence to a gainful commerce with the beſieged city.

Obſtinate beyond all reaſonable belief;

ſuffer the greateſt hardſhips.

It

* Satyre Menipp. tom. 1. p. 400. Mem. de Sully, ibid.

Book III.

1589. July 27.

It was proved by Henry's long delay of the aſſault of the ſuburbs, that he was unwilling to proceed to the utmoſt violence againſt the Pariſians. This enterpriſe, the only ſcene of warlike terror, which the beſieged beheld, was accompliſhed in two hours of midnight. In the midſt of torrents of fire, from the artillery, and ſmall arms of the aſſailants; all the quarters of the ſuburbs were forced at the ſame time. The poſts of the royal troops, being now advanced to the walls, and gates of the city, a great part of its inhabitants experienced a diſmal aggravation of their diſtreſs by famine. Excluded from gleaning the herbs and roots, which grew, in that ſeaſon, about the ſuburbs; they began to eat the more rank and unwholeſome ones, about the ramparts, and unfrequented lanes of the city. Numbers pined under this ſickly food; and the ſtreets were here, and there, ſtrewed with their emaciated bodies. Their recourſe to hides, and ſkins of all kinds of animals, ſoaked in hot water; to the carcaſes of the moſt loathſome creatures; to paſtes of the chaff, and huſks of grain, and vile roots; proved no leſs pernicious, and deſtructive to them. Above twelve * thouſand died in leſs than three months; and the diſeaſes becoming epidemical, threatened a more general havock. Forced by the unreſtrained, and ferocious cries that were raiſed, by the more deſperate, for *bread* or *peace*; their rulers ſaw it neceſſary to diſpenſe with the oaths they had taken; and to ſend a deputation of their number, to the King's camp. The queſtionable powers of thoſe envoys, their equivocal language, and propoſitions, about making the Duke of Mayenne a party in the agreement; did not hinder the King to offer them reaſonable terms, for a ceſſation of hoſtilities; and to deliver them, in writing. It appeared that Henry was more deeply affected than they, with the deplorable miſeries of the city. They returned, and ſaw the ſcene of them increaſed to a horrid extremity; and deviſed, only, how

The ſuburbs being aſſaulted;

the famine of the city increaſes;

Auguſt 5.

* Thuan. lib. 99. p. 77. Satyre Menippee, ibid. p. 410.

how to ſpread ſuch reports of the conference with him, and of the certain intelligence they had, of the Duke of Mayenne's immediate approach with an army; as might prevent the inſurrections of the people; and harden them more to ſuffer their cruel deſtiny. It is, hardly, credible, what powerful efficacy, the harangues of the preachers had upon them, this way *. Though the King had his agents in the city; there was, only one conſiderable mutiny fomented by them, amongſt the people; who, now, after all their calamities, attempted to prolong their weary lives, by grinding human bones into powder; which were taken from the charnel-houſes, or dug out of the graves.

it is ſupported with amazing patience.

Upon the preſumption, which every day rendered ſtronger, that the city would be conſtrained to a ſubmiſſion †; all military efforts, againſt it, had been ſuſpended. Some faint ones, now made, were ſcarce ſufficient to intimidate the feeble and reduced garriſon of Paris. The approach of the Duke of Mayenne, ſo often proved a falſe report, was not only diſbelieved; but, by a culpable negligence, was little enquired after, by Henry, and his officers. To the ſhame of their inattention, and to their ſurpriſe, the Duke of Mayenne, followed by a Spaniſh army, under the conduct of the Duke of Parma himſelf, was advanced to the town of Meaux; before they had diſtinct information of his march from Flanders. The procuring ſuch an auxiliary army from the catholic King, at the riſk of his military affairs, in the Low Countries; was a matter of no ſmall admiration. But, contrary to the Duke of Parma's own advice, and againſt his remonſtrances; Philip had expreſsly commanded him to conduct in perſon, ſuch a part of his army into France, as might be ſufficient for the relief of Paris. The Duke of Mayenne's late oppoſition, to his ambitious ſchemes, had not cooled

While Henry is in hopes of the ſurrender of the city;

* Satyre Menipp. ibid. p. 411. et 419.

† Thuan. lib. 99. p. 77.

Book III. 1590.

cooled the eagerneſs of this Monarch, to maintain the flame of civil diſcord in France; and to ſtrengthen, by it, the foundation of his own political intereſt, and aſcendency in a kingdom; which, reduced to union, would have been formidable to him.

it is relieved by the Duke of Parma. Auguſt 22.

Nothing could more diſconcert Henry's procedure, than this unexpected arrival of the Duke of Parma*; with an army, which joined to the French troops of the league, was little inferior in number to his own. He ſaw the neceſſity he would be put to, of raiſing altogether, or ſlackening the blockade; which had employed his army, for near four months, and as the moſt certain intelligence aſſured him, would have made him maſter of the city, in a few days. Thus, the fate of the kingdom, ſo near being happily terminated, was changed all at once; while Henry's humanity, joined with too much preſumption about the ſurrender of Paris, could be reckoned the only failure in his conduct, which contributed to this revolution. There ſeemed, alſo, to be ſome confeſſion on his part, that more advantage might have been made of the negotiation with the Pariſian envoys; by Henry's endeavouring, rather unopportunely, to revive it. But this project being ſoon found vain; and the conſideration of the army and the General, to be combated, enforcing the argument for abandoning the ſiege; Henry, with his uſual alacrity, put himſelf at the head of his cavalry, and marched towards Meaux, to obſerve the motions of the enemy. Upon his return, without an opportunity of falling upon any of their quarters; it bore a diſpute, in his council of war †, whether the army ſhould wait the approach of the enemy, at Claye, its preſent poſt, which was ſufficiently convenient for that purpoſe, or advance to Chelles; a place near the town of Lagni; which afforded more ſpace of ground for coming to a general battle. La Noüe, and the Marſhal

A council of war being held by Henry;

* Satyre Menipp. ibid. p. 421. et 423. † D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 8.

Marſhal Biron, differed in opinion, upon this critical point; and, though the Viſcount of Turenne adhered to the judgment of the former, the King, either from too much precipitation, or a faulty compliance with the over-bearing temper of the latter, preferred the Marſhal's deciſion. To change ground, before ſuch an able, and circumſpect commander, as the Duke of Parma, required the greateſt caution. The civil wars of France had not proved the propereſt ſchool for teaching its beſt generals this accurate, and refined practice of the military art. La Noüe, who had ſerved in the wars of the Netherlands, underſtood it better than any of them; and the judgment now given by him, was founded on his obſervations of the military conduct in them, which the Duke of Parma had improved. The conſequence, of not attending to the force of his arguments, for maintaining the advantageous poſt, at Claye, ſoon became, unhappily, apparent. The ground to which the King's army now moved, being too careleſsly reconnoitred; the Duke of Parma found an opportunity left him of encamping cloſe in its neighbourhood, without any danger of being attacked in his quarters. With a valley, and a moraſs interpoſed between him and the enemy; he defied, in his regularly entrenched camp, any attempts that could be made, to aſſault it, or to force him to a general engagement. He had the glory of verifying, by his art, the anſwer he gave to a trumpet ſent by Henry, to challenge him to an action in the field. "Tell your King, ſaid he, that I have not marched into France, to receive directions from him, who is my adverſary. If a battle be his aim, it is his buſineſs, to oblige me to fight one; but he will find it no eaſy matter, to ſhow, in this way, his ſuperiority." Though the King's army was increaſed, to five and twenty thouſand men, the attack of Parma's intrenchments could not, without too much hazard, be undertaken. After a few days had paſſed, this general drew out his men, as if he prepared for an immediate engagement. But, while he formed a large front towards the

It is determined to offer battle;

which is avoided by the Duke of Parma;

BOOK III. 1590.

enemy, the bulk of his troops filed off unobſerved, on the ſide of Lagny. In the midſt of ſome heſitation, whether to attack him, or to throw ſuccours into the town; the place was, quickly, forced to ſurrender to the Spaniards.

who takes Lagny; Septem. 8.

and compleats the relief of Paris.

By means of this atchievement, the Duke of Parma accompliſhed, in a great meaſure, his principal deſign; the relief of Paris. Lagny being taken; the ſtores collected above it, could paſs down the river Marne, on which it ſtood, and, without obſtruction, be carried by the Seine, into the capital. To attack him now, was, almoſt, impracticable; as he could evade the encounter, by paſſing to Paris, on whichever ſide of the river he pleaſed, and throw the obſtacle of it between him and the King's army. How far Henry was chargeable, on this occaſion, with overſight, or want of ability to defeat the art of his antagoniſt; may be judged. He was too ſenſible to military reputation, as Sully obſerves *, not to feel the diſcredit that might ariſe to him; from the manifeſt advantage over him, which Parma had gained. It is certain, however, beſides the ſuperior diſcipline of Parma's troops, a circumſtance, in which Henry could not, poſſibly, vie with him, that the King at this time, was, by no means ſo much maſter of the reſolutions to be taken in this council of war, as the Spaniſh general. The behaviour of the French chieftains, at this juncture, was a ſhameful teſtimony of their ſuperficial attachment to him, and of their propenſity to ſhow their independency †. As the long ſiege had conſumed the King's narrow finances, waſted the cloaths of the ſoldiers, and exhauſted the camp-furniture, and ſtores of the army; a general murmuring for pay and gratuities, that could not be given them, enſued; and many of the diſcontented princes and nobility began to take the liberty of retiring, with their troops. A compariſon, to the diſhonour of theſe chiefs, was drawn betwixt their

A diſcontent ariſing in Henry's army;

* Memoires, liv. 4. † D'Aubigne, ibid.

their behaviour to their King, at that time, unprovided with money, for the ordinary expences of his table; and the ſubmiſſion of the common people of Paris, to all the hardſhips and havock, which famine and diſeaſes had made among them, from blind attachment to the league. It appeared, indeed, too probable an allegation, which was advanced by ſome; that Henry's army had been ſo long kept together, from the hopes the officers entertained, of ſharing in the ſpoils of Paris; rather than from principles of loyalty. With his hugonotiſm, many of his catholic retainers ſtill thought theſe to be incompatible; and their invincible rancour was teſtified on various occaſions. When Henry ſaw that the preſent eruption of it, was accompanied with numerous deſertions from his camp; he choſe, rather than expoſe this infirmity, under which he laboured, before the eyes of his enemies, to relinquiſh the purſuit of the Duke of Parma. After a ſlight attempt, by eſcalade in the night-time, to ſurprize Paris; he retreated towards the Oize; and there diſmiſſed, under the appearance of regular orders, the parties of his mutinous nobility; and retained, in his camp, only ſuch a body of his troops, as was ſufficient to act upon emergencies.

he finds it neceſſary to break up his camp.

Henry quitted not the campaign, without the certain view of having, ſoon, the opportunity of returning to combat the Spaniſh General *. He foreſaw, that, by attempting the ſiege of places, he would conſume his own ſtrength, to little effect; and that, beſides other motives, the diſhonour of inactivity would induce him to a ſpeedy retreat; which might afford the deſired occaſion of annoying him. The event ſhowed the ſolidity and exactneſs of this judgment. By eſſaying to add more luſtre to the honour and advantage gained by him; Parma forfeited part of his reputation, for prudence †. Having engaged in the ſiege of Corbeil, under

But returning with a body of troops,

Septem. 24.

* Mem. de Sully. ibid.

† DAubigné, ibid. chap. 9.

Book III. 1590.

pretence of enlarging the relief of Paris; the reduction of this inconſiderable place coſt him three weeks labour, and the loſs of ſeven hundred of his ſoldiers. Finding, by this experiment, the hazard of ſuch enterpriſes, and attentive to the ſafe retreat of his army, into Flanders, before the approach of winter; he put his troops in motion, for their rout thither; with all the caution and vigilance, againſt aſſaults from the King's troops, which he had diſcovered, in his entrance into the kingdom. But Henry having prepared a proper body of his troops, for attending his motions, and throwing garriſons into the capital places, that lay in Parma's way, ſoon rendered his march, to the frontiers, a moſt vexatious, and troubleſome one, In conducting a variety of ſkirmiſhes, with the rear of the Spaniards, and of attacks on their quarters; the King ſhowed no leſs addreſs, and dexterity, than Parma manifeſted in guarding againſt, and evading his enterpriſes. Some of theſe were bloody; and to the advantage of the retreating army. Perhaps no two commanders, in the modern times of Europe, were ever ſo nearly matched, in the field; with different abilities. The quickſighted, and ſtrenuous alacrity of the one, ever ready to diſcern, and improve his advantage, vied with the cool circumſpection, and foreſight of the other. Upon this nice occaſion, of diſplaying their ſeveral talents; the conteſt for ſuperiority was rendered more vigorous, from their knowledge of each other. The genius of the two warriors, admired by the critics of the military ſcience, appeared, alſo, to be peculiarly adapted to their diſtinct ſituations, and provinces. Parma's capacity was not more eſteemed, amongſt the Spaniſh captains, and ſoldiers; than Henry's excellence was, amongſt the French; who *, according to their natural taſte for ſpirited and enterpriſing valour, ſpoke now, rather with unbecoming diſdain of that inactive prudence and caution, which ſeemed to border on timidity; though its

November.

He renders Parma's retreat difficult and hazardous.

* Sully, ibid.

its effects had, ſo lately, ſtruck them with ſurpriſe. Corbeil retaken, before Parma had performed half his march; and the reputation acquired by Henry, in inſulting, and annoying his retreat, as if he had been vanquiſhed; contributed to render the eſtimate of the advantage of the former, in the campaign, far leſs conſiderable, than it merited; even in the opinion of the partizans of the league. All the hiſtorians agree, that ſeveral neutral Lords, upon Parma's exit from the field, in this manner, declared for Henry; by which means, his affairs were reſtored to much the ſame ſituation, as at the commencement of the ſiege of Paris.

1590.

1591. Affairs of the provinces of Britanny and Provence.

Inſtead of opening the hiſtory of the enſuing year, with the account of the ſucceſsful ſieges of ſeveral places, by the King, or his Generals; it is more important, to the illuſtration of the great events, to give attention to what paſſed in ſome provinces of the kingdom; thoſe, eſpecially, of Britanny and Provence *. In the former, where the Duke of Mercoeur maintained the intereſt of the league; the Spaniſh monarch, aiming, particularly, at the dominion of this maritime province, had, in concert with the Duke, and, by ſpecial treaty with him, taken poſſeſſion of the ſea-port-town of Blavet; with a Spaniſh garriſon. The pretenſions, and views of Mercoeur, with reſpect to the uſurpation of this dutchy, being perſonal, and detached from his connections with the league; this ſcheme, of ſupporting himſelf, by Philip's aid, had been, readily, adopted by him; and, from like motives, and with no leſs eagerneſs, that prince had ſent his promiſed auxiliaries. When this ſhameful delivery of a key of the realm, to Spain, could not be prevented by the royaliſts, and the Duke of Mayenne and the league beheld it with indifference; Queen Elizabeth of England thought, that the intereſt and ſecurity of her kingdom required her to oppoſe

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 19.

Book III.

1591.

pose the Spaniſh monarch's deſigns, upon Britanny *. Alarmed, about the intereſting conſequences of them; her ſhips of war were ordered to purſue the Spaniſh tranſports, and prevent the debarkation of the troops they carried. As this could not be effectuated; and the Duke of Parma's march into France redoubled Elizabeth's apprehenſions; ſhe offered to enter into a new treaty, with Henry, for enabling him to expel the Spaniards from Britanny. In conſequence of the ratification of it; three thouſand Engliſh, under the conduct of Sir John Norris, were landed in that province; and, in a ſhort time after, the Queen conſented, that a body of four thouſand more of her troops ſhould be ſent into Normandy, to aſſiſt him in the ſiege of Roüen. Thus, to combat the foreign auxiliaries of the partizans of the league; Henry readily procured the aid of the Engliſh Queen; who alſo facilitated, by her pecuniary ſupplies, the levy of a large body of German troops for his ſervice. Such reinforcements, together with ſome ſuccours from the States of Holland, enabled him to muſter a moſt formidable army in the end of the ſummer.

Queen Elizabeth is diſpoſed to expel the Spaniards from the latter.

Almoſt abandoned to their fate, the diſtricts of Provence, and Dauphiny, run the hazard of being ſeduced from their allegiance, to the crown of France, or, being over-run, by the enterpriſes of the Duke of Savoy †. In the former, the pretext of religion ſo far availed to promote his intrigues, that he was received, at Aix, under the title of Governor, and Lieutenant-general of the province, given him by the States; with almoſt all the ceremonies of honour, which could be paid to the King of France. He began to act the Sovereign, by regulating the departments of the military, and civil government, with the ſame facility as in his own dominions. To ſuch

Provence and Dauphiny are invaded by the Duke of Savoy.

* Acta Regia, vol. 4. p. 119. Camden, b. 4. p. 4. 47. † D'Aubign, lib. 3. chap. 22.

1591.

ſuch inſolent uſurpation, by a petty Prince, did the diſcord, and anarchy, which prevailed in Provence, expoſe that important frontier; already ravaged by his ſeizure of the Marquiſate of Saluſſes. For ſome time, this invaſion could not be reſtrained. But, in Dauphiny, he found in Leſdiguieres; a reſolute, able, and ſucceſsful opponent of his ambition. Savoy's troops being every where beaten, and various places wreſted from the partizans of the league, whom he ſupported; Grenoble was, at laſt, reduced under that commander's power. How, often, Henry himſelf wanted not only ſufficient authority to direct in the diſpoſal of provincial governments, but was, capriciouſly, controuled by the imperious catholicks of his council; may be judged, from a ſtricking inſtance, in the caſe of Leſdiguieres. After the reduction of Grenoble; this chieftain, with becoming loyalty and obeiſance, ſent his ſecretary to the King, to requeſt his royal patent for the government of it; which had been promiſed him as the ſuitable reward of his labours. The majority of Henry's council would, by no means, allow of this important charge being beſtowed on one, that was of the proteſtant profeſſion. They inſiſted on its repugnancy to the articles, the King had ſigned, for their ſatisfaction; and Henry, to avoid altercation, yielded the point. The ſecretary hearing the unexpected negative put upon Leſdiguieres's requeſt, withdrew in ſilence; but, in a moment, preſenting himſelf again; "Gentlemen *, ſaid he to the council, I have only one thing to ſuggeſt to you: Since it ſuits not with your pleaſure, to grant to my maſter, the government of Grenoble; deign, at leaſt, to conſider, by what means you can take it from him." This ſarcaſtical reflection, diſpoſed the Marſhal Biron to become an advocate for Leſdiguieres; and the King was permitted to fulfil his promiſe.

As in deliberations of the political kind, Henry was, often, conſtrained to follow the dictates of others; ſo, in thoſe relative to the military

* Ibid.

Book III. 1589.

military operations, he found it, yet more impracticable to chuſe, or to obſerve, his own ſcheme of procedure. From the continual viciſſitude of events, in the ſcenes of action, from the contrariety of informations, about the military condition of places, from the readineſs, or the reluctance of the chieftains, in different cities and provinces, to engage in enterpriſes, and other circumſtances peculiar to all civil wars; the ſchemes and projects of ſieges, or expeditions, could be ſcarcely connected with any general plan; but, on the contrary, the execution of them was rendered precarious, and deſultory. It appears, that it was a great ſubject of conteſt, in the councils of war, in what actions the King's main force ſhould be employed; and that, upon this ſubject, the views of the chief nobility, either to ſupport their own power, or to enlarge their commiſſions, civil and military, in their provincial governments, ſerved, chiefly, to direct or ſway their opinions, and judgments. This fatal policy, by which the grandees endeavoured to canton and fortify themſelves, in the provinces, in an independent manner, was, indeed, common to both parties; but its influence would prove moſt pernicious, on the King's ſide. To reduce this incoherent ſeries of exploits, to ſome order, or method; to obviate the partial, and intereſted aims of the chieftains, without diſguſting them; and to render their enterpriſes ſubſervient to the intereſt of the ſtate, while they intended, by them, to advance their own; was the arduous, and perplexing taſk, which Henry, in the courſe of the year's campaign, was called to execute. His activity, in the performance of it, muſt be owned to be truly amazing. In the multiplicity of warlike enterpriſes; all the capital ones were not only concerted, but perſonally attended by him. A new attempt to ſurpriſe Paris, called that of the *meal*, from the baggs of it, carried, by ſtratagem, to the gates of the city; and the ſieges of Chartres, of Corbie, of Noyon, and Louviers; were, each of them, ſucceſſively conducted by him. His martial

Difficulties encountered by Henry in the management of his affairs.

martial ardor, as Sully * obſerves, with reſpect to the affair of Mante, carried him rapidly every where, to ſuperintend, or to aſſiſt the projects that were ſet on foot. During the progreſs of thoſe expeditions; many feats of valour, and military ſkill, worthy of honourable mention, were performed by the King, and his general officers. But, here the moſt intereſting incidents only, are intended to be traced. Such may be reckoned the loſs that Henry, and the ſtate ſuſtained by the death of La Noüe, and that of the Count de Chaſtillon. The latter died ſoon after the ſiege of Chartres; where he gave the laſt proof of his extraordinary genius for the camp, by the invention of a military bridge, for the aſſault of places; of a new, and curious mechaniſm. The former received his mortal wound, at the ſiege of Lamballe, in Britanny; where he had been ſent by the King, to conduct, under the Prince de Dombes, the war againſt the Duke of Mercoeur. As long as the military name and character, joined with the ſtricteſt honour, and integrity, is eſteemed, that of La Noüe will be held in diſtinguiſhed regard, among the intelligent, and the brave of every nation. From them, alſo, Chatillon's early diſplay of theſe heroic qualities, will obtain the merited approbation; and his untimely exit will be accounted, by them, a pathetic confirmation of his title to the inheritance of fame.

June. Death of La Noüe and of Chaſtillon.

While Henry found ſuch conſtant occupation, in the field; he was obliged, likewiſe, to provide againſt attacks and dangers of another kind; which were thoſe ariſing from the new fulminations of the Pope againſt him, and from the growth and intrigues of what was called the *third party;* in the boſom of his court. Sixtus Quintus's deceaſe having vacated the pontificate; Urban VII. was elected in his room, and died in thirteen days: And, upon a new

* Ibid. liv. 3.

BOOK III.

election; Gregory XIV. was promoted to the apoſtolic chair. When Henry IV. was informed of Sixtus's death; who had changed his ſentiments of the league, he is reported to have ſaid, "I have then loſt the *all* of a Pope which I ever had;" and it appeared, immediately, that Gregory's advancement was * extremely unfavourable to him. Born in the *Milaneze*, and having been nominated to the conſiſtory, by the Spaniſh party; he diſcovered all the partiality and biaſs to that court, which might be expected from a vaſſal of the King of Spain. Inſtead of deliberating upon the memorial, for the affairs of France, left, for the conſideration of the Cardinals, by the Duke of Luxembourg, or waiting for the expected return of that nobleman, with new inſtructions; he not only declared himſelf the protector of the league, but aſſigned ſome pecuniary funds, for its ſupport, and raiſed troops, to be ſent into France; under the command of the Duke of Montemarciano, his nephew. Being thus diſpoſed to wield the weapons of a ſecular Prince, againſt Henry; he forgot not to give all the edge and force, he could, to the ſpiritual ones of the forgery of Rome. The briefs and bulls, iſſued by him, were conceived in the moſt rancorous ſtrain. Henry's eccleſiaſtical partizans were menaced with immediate excommunication; if they did not relinquiſh their adherence to him; while the moſt factious aſſociates of the league, in Paris, were cheriſhed by his declarations, and promiſes †. In place of Cajetan; Philip de Sega, Biſhop, or Cardinal, of Placentia, held forth, no leſs ardently, the terrors of Gregory's ſpiritual rod, until Marſil Landriano, the nuncio of the latter, appeared in France; charged with all his monitories, and comminations. The King endeavoured to prevent their effect by a declaration, ſimilar to that he had formerly publiſhed; and, as the Pope's impetuoſity, and contemptuous treatment of

1591. By the advancement of Gregory XIV. to the Pontificate;

Henry incurrs more fulminations from Rome;

July 4.

* Remarques ſur la Satyre Menippée, tom. 2. p. 207. & 272. † Ibid. p. 137. D'Avila, liv. 12.

of the kingdom, were offenſive, even to ſome of the friends of the league; the parliaments of Tours, and Chalons, framed arrets, againſt his procedure, in terms expreſſive of their higheſt indignation. The Pope himſelf, was called an enemy to the peace of the church; his bulls were condemned to be burnt; and a warrant was granted, for ſeizing the perſon of his nuncio. The clergy of the King's party, alſo taking up the argument, againſt the precipitant, and uncanonical, decrees of his Holineſs; the controverſy, between the writers on both ſides, was revived with much keeneſs. It may be reckoned one ſpecial benefit, redounding from this conteſt, that the cordiality and zeal it awakened, amongſt Henry's true friends, enabled him to revoke, with the conſent of his council, the edicts of the year 1585, and 1588; which were ſubverſive of the royal authority; as well as, of the toleration of the proteſtants. In their room, thoſe made in favour of liberty of conſcience, were ſubſtituted, and, eſpecially, the edict granted by Henry III. in the year 1577; which was more explicit, in its articles, than the reſt. Thus, the firſt public act paſſed by Henry, in behalf of his proteſtant friends, may be, in a good meaſure, aſcribed to the violent animoſity, manifeſted by the court of Rome, againſt him.

which are combated by the parliaments.

Upon ſome of Henry's friends, of a particular caſt of mind and ſpirit, the fulminations of the Pope, and the public fermentation excited by them, produced a different effect. A rare opportunity ſeemed to ſuch, to be preſented by thoſe incidents, of maturing certain political reveries, which had been, privately, agitated amongſt them *. Thoſe geniuſes were found, among the domeſtics, and retainers of the young Cardinal of Bourbon, nephew to the former; and thoſe of the Count de Soiſſons, his brother. Touchard, Abbot of Bellozane, who had been the Cardinal's preceptor, du Perron,

Intrigues are promoted at court by ſome partizans;

* Remarques ſur la Satyre, ibid. p. 126. Thuan. lib. 101. p. 154.

Book III. 1591.

alſo of the ſame clerical order, and Balbani, an Italian agent; were the principal perſonages, who framed thoſe factious projects, and induced the Cardinal, their patron, to eſpouſe them. Their aim was no leſs, than to advance the Cardinal to the throne of France; which, as affairs ſtood with Henry, in reſpect of the averſion of many catholicks of his court, as well as of the league, to him, and the thunder of the church that now fell thick upon him; they conceived to be a very practicable, and hopeful ſcheme. But, as the wit of ſuch projectors, ſhines beſt in the cabinet, and any ſtep to execution diſcovers, often, the fallacy of their views, or the inſufficiency of the means employed to attain them; it was the fate of this little cabal about the Cardinal's competition for the crown, to be quickly detected, without their knowing it; to have their ſecrets betrayed by one of their number; and to ſuffer the Cardinal to expoſe himſelf, by a ridiculous indication of his ſeditious temper, before the King's council. Upon occaſion of the King's propoſing the re-eſtabliſhment of the edict of toleration; he offered to withdraw from the council; but, as none of the prelates followed him, the King commanded him to return to his ſeat. Abortive, however, as the intrigues of his aſſociates were ſoon rendered; they got the name of the third party, and were more ſpoken of than known; till they mingled with the diſcontented catholicks, at the time of the aſſembly of the ſtates of the league. What is further affirmed, about the violent purpoſes of this faction, to attempt the King's life, rather than fail in their aim; appears, from all circumſtances, unworthy of credit; though the author of the remarks on the Satyre Menippée ſupports this aſſertion *, and Sully's Memoirs inſinuate the truth of it.

called the Third Party.

In

* Liv. 5.

1591.

Other intrigues are cauſed by the Count of Soiſſons,

In connection with this domeſtic cabal, againſt Henry; another was engendered, by the ambition of the Count de Soiſſons; whoſe turbulent conduct may be reckoned, in a great meaſure, to juſtify the capital ſtrokes that Sully has given to his character. His favourite ſcheme, dictated, rather from reſtleſs ambition, than from love, was his marriage with the Princeſs Catherine, of Navarre, the King's ſiſter *. Henry's own amours are ſaid, to have raiſed up a keen inſtigator of this connubial union; which was known to be highly diſagreeable to him. For the once admired, and now neglected Coriſande, Counteſs of Guiche, no other reſource was left, but the exerciſe of reſentment, for love diſappointed, and ſcorned; though ſhe is reported to have ſold her jewels, and pledged her eſtate, to furniſh Henry with money, in his ſtraits. But years, that wore away her charms, diſſipated Henry's engagements; who now yielded his heart to the more powerful attractions of the fair Gabrielle d'Eſtrees; known, afterwards, under ſeveral honorary titles. It was the diſcarded miſtreſs's ſatisfaction, that ſhe found ſuch an opportunity of counteracting Henry's views, with reſpect to his ſiſter; and of raiſing up, by the intervention of *Hymen*, a revenger of Cupid's wrong's to her. The parties, eaſily excited, by her, to diſdain all reſtraints, for the liberty of love; agreed to make a match, without being farther ſolicitous about the King's approbation. But the Count de Soiſſons was one, whoſe character, marked with moroſeneſs, formality, and affectation, rendered him ſuſpected; as well as diſagreeable to Henry. His motions were, on this account, more narrowly watched; and the intercourſe he held with the Princeſs Catherine, being detected; ſuch meaſures were taken by the King, that the Count's attempt to fly off with her, was defeated †. It was believed, amongſt the courtiers, that, from political con-

* Thuan. lib. 101. p. 155. L'Eſprit de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 156. † D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 23.

Book III.

1591.

Eſcape of the young Duke of Guiſe.

conſiderations, Henry choſe, at any rate, to defer the marriage of his ſiſter. About this time; an incident, of a different kind, was accounted diſadvantageous to the King; which, upon more mature reflection, was perceived to have, rather, a favourable tendency. It was the eſcape of the young Duke of Guiſe from the place of his confinement. As he was likely to be a competitor, with his uncle, the Duke of Mayenne, for favour and authority, with the league; the queſtion, about the conſequence of his appearance on the ſcene, was reſolved into the obvious maxim; that its power would be leſs formidable, with two heads, than with one.

Diſagreement and jealouſies are obſervable among the partizans of the league.

The ſyſtem of the league, upon a cloſer view of it, appeared not ſo conſolidated, by all its ſupports; but that evident ſymptoms of diſunion, amongſt its partizans, might be obſerved. Though the raiſing of the ſiege of Paris, by the Duke of Parma, had revived the drooping vigour of its adherents, in the other cities, and provinces, and the confidence of the league ſeemed to be more firmly, and generally, placed in the powerful aid of Spain, and the future efforts of that able commander; yet this very dependence on Spain, neceſſary as it ſeemed to be, created diſlike and ſuſpicion, in others, beſides the Duke of Mayenne *. As the council of the ſixteen had, by their ſervices during the ſiege of Paris, much regained their credit and influence; their procedure, always, in the ſame blind tract of violent zeal, multiplied the occaſions of offence which were taken by the parliament, and the wiſer claſs of the citizens †. Their augmenting the garriſon of foreign troops, in the city, with four thouſand ſoldiers, became a new ſubject of diſpute, and altercation. The parties in it, encountering each other

* Satyre Menipp. tom. 1. p. 370. et 74. Thuan. lib. 101.

† D'Avila, liv. 12.

ther with the tone of animoſity, and the language of contention, learned to differ, more widely, than at firſt; and found ſuch a diſagreement of the principles and motives, upon which they acted; as fixed them in irreconcileable oppoſition. By ſeveral counſellors of the parliament, the ſixteen began to be looked upon, as a company of hypocritical, or deluded traitors; whom the gold, or the deceitful inſinuations of Spain, had induced to betray their country, to a foreign yoke. Theſe aſſociates, again, ſuſpected, and abhored their opponents, as crafty, and profane politicians; who, by their averſion to Spaniſh counſels, ſhowed their apoſtacy from the engagements, to which they were bound, by the *holy* catholic union*. In the mean time; the Duke of Mayenne, attentive to the higher concerns of the league, and anxious to ſound the inclinations of his chief confederates, had conveened a general meeting of them, or their envoys, in the city of Rheims.

This aſſembly of the foreign and domeſtic patrons of the union, was intended to haſten a convention of the ſtates, and to prepare matters, for the election of a King of France; under the ſhew of its authority. The Cardinal de Pellevé, was nominated to the archbiſhopric of Rheims, and had a commiſſion from the Pope, to preſide at the future ceremony of the unction. But the opening of this interview, ſoon, diſcovered the jarring views, of the parties; which, on the firſt motions about a queſtion, ſo intereſting to them, appeared to be further removed from concord. Finding that they anticipated an event, which required more time, and a better conjuncture of affairs, to bring it to maturity; they relinquiſhed, for the preſent, their purpoſe of aſſembling the ſtates; and turned their deliberations upon the means of ſupporting their common intereſt, with better fortune, in the field, againſt Henry.

At a meeting of the heads of the league;

the deſign of aſſembling the ſtates is changed,

A

* Thuan. lib. 101. p. 157.

BOOK III. 1591.

into that of deputing the Preſident Jeanin to the Spaniſh court.

A deputation to the Catholic King was reſolved on, as a convenient meaſure; and the preſident Jeanin was choſen to be the agent in it. From this reſolution, and the character of the envoy; it was perceptible that the Duke of Mayenne, not only deſired to gain time; but, ſo far to explore Philip's intentions, and purpoſes, with regard to the future election of a King, by the league, that he might underſtand, what hopes he could entertain, about his own advancement *. Jeanin, as much a true Frenchman, as the Duke of Mayenne himſelf, had the qualities of political penetration, ſagacity, and prudence, neceſſary to the proper diſcharge of this delicate commiſſion; in which it was requiſite, to ſhow a compliance with Philip's projects, and, at the ſame time, to engage him to concur with thoſe of the Duke of Mayenne, and his party. It was even deſigned, by this negotiation, to perſuade the Catholic King to adopt ſome ſcheme that might, ſpeedily, reſtore the peace of France. But ſuch propoſals, Jeanin found to be, only, the political dreams of Villeroy, and other Frenchmen; who fancied that Philip was poſſeſſed of more generoſity; than his miniſters, and envoys. He perceived, on the contrary, that, at the court of Spain, the opinion fondly cheriſhed, by the monarch, and his cabinet-counſellors, was, that France would, ſoon, yield itſelf, to their dominion; and that, to promote this much wiſhed event, it was the rule of their policy, to furniſh, only, ſuch a meaſure of aid to the Duke of Mayenne, and the league, as might enable them to maintain a ſtrenuous conflict, with the royaliſts; but, by no means, to bring affairs to a final deciſion; until, from wearineſs of the war, they ſhould be diſpoſed to comply with all Philip's requiſitions. Content, therefore, with treating only about the ſuccours that were to be afforded by

Auguſt 20. Spain; Jeanin returned to France, to make the report of his embaſſy.

If

* Thuan. ibid. D'Avila, liv. 12. P. Daniel, tom. 9. p. 538.

1591.

If the Duke of Mayenne had reaſon to be diſſatisfied, with the crafty conduct of the Spaniſh court, with reſpect to his intereſt, and that of the league; he found more cauſe of provocation given him, by the tools of the Spaniſh faction, in Paris. The account of their infamous attempt to domineer in the city, and of the ſhocking exceſs of their malignity, and lawleſs rage, may be here ſubjoined to the narrative given of the diſſenſion of the ſixteen, with the parliament, and the ſoberer citizens. It deſerves a place in hiſtorical record; as a ſtriking example of the barbarous violation of all juſtice and humanity, perpetrated by the demagogues of Paris; when, in hatred of thoſe who were not equally violent with themſelves, and in contempt of ſuch as ſtill upheld the form of the magiſtracy, and the laws, they aſſumed a tribunitian power. Flattered with the conceit of their own importance, by the letter written to them, by Pope Gregory, and encouraged by the commendations, which the Spaniſh agents, Baptiſta Taxis, and Diego d'Ibarra, beſtowed on their enthuſiaſtic zeal; they thought it became them to act, altogether, upon their own plan; and to take meaſures relative to the government of the city, and the conduct of the more general affairs of the union; without regard to the Duke of Mayenne *. Having ſent ſome deputies to this commander, when employed in beſieging Corbeil; and receiving no ſatisfactory anſwer to their ſeditious memorial; they, again, renewed their inſolent demands, for reforming, or purging the parliament, and the other courts, by the excluſion of ſuſpected perſons. In revenge, for the diſregard, with which their remonſtrances were treated; they not only teſtified their inclination to ſubſtitute the Duke of Guiſe, in the room of his uncle; but diſpatched letters to the King of Spain, in which they offered the crown of France to himſelf, or to the Infanta; according to his Majeſty's option. To create perturbation in the minds

The council of ſixteen renew their barbarous zeal;

proceed to act independently of the Duke of Mayenne;

* Satyre Menip. tom. 1. p. 378. and 73. Thuan. lib. 102. p. 196

BOOK III. 1591.

minds of the citizens; they framed a new ſcroll of their holy bond of union; the ſubſcription of which being declined by Cardinal Gondi, Biſhop of Paris; he was excluded from his function in the city; and his revenues were ſeized. Their next aſſault was directed againſt the parliament; and the Preſident Briſſon, on various accounts, was made the object of it. With qualifications ſuitable to the dignity of his legal office; this Preſident, unhappily perſuaded himſelf, that he could exerciſe it, with ſome degree of honour; when Achilles Harlay, and his brethren of the long robe evacuated the court of parliament, and were impriſoned in the Baſtille. The vanity of performing the office of firſt preſident, proved, alſo, a tempting motive to him. He thought, that in this place, though illegally conſtituted, he might be the moderator of violence, and the reſtrainer of popular outrage, and private injuſtice, and acquire the reputation of having ſaved the city; in the time of its greateſt perils. He ſoon became ſenſible of the error *, into which he had, blameleſsly fallen; and was heard to ſay, often, among his friends, with a ſigh; "that the ſixteen had marked him for their victim." This inauſpicious prediction of his own fate was fulfilled.

and contrive the maſſacre of the Preſident Briſſon;

Determined to deſtroy him, who dared to oppoſe their meaſures; a few of the moſt ſavage, amongſt them, undertook to accompliſh the bloody deed. The ſubſcriptions of ſome of the council of union, to a blank paper, being obtained, in the midſt of clamour, and under pretence that it was to be filled up, with a copy of the oath of union; it was fabricated into a ſentence of condemnation, againſt Briſſon. He was encountered, by a band of the ruffian tribe, unexpectedly; who, pretending that his preſence was required in the city-hall, conducted him to the Chatellet; and forced him into one of its dungeons. He was, ſoon, environed by ſeveral perſons; who declared him ſentenced to die; for holding correſpondence

* Thuan. ibid, p. 195.

reſpondence with hereticks. Who are my judges, ſaid the preſident; and where are the evidences againſt me? He was anſwered with a ſcornful ſneer; and, being ſcarce allowed time for confeſſion, was hanged upon one of the beams. At the ſame time, Tardiff, and Larcher, two other counſellors of the parliament, underwent the ſame fate. All this career of violent rage was promoted by the inſtigation of the Spaniſh agents; who thought that the faction of the ſixteen, by rendering themſelves more obnoxious to the Duke of Mayenne's reſentment, would be fixed, unalterably, in their maſter's intereſt.

and two other counſellors.

The horror excited amongſt all the citizens, inclined to order, or peace, at this outrageous ſcene, and the terror of their ſuffering by the barbarity of the demagogues; occaſioned various couriers to be ſent to the Duke of Mayenne. He was implored to come, and relieve the city from their inſufferable tyranny; which tended to undermine his authority, and ſubvert all legal government. Already aware of their acting in treacherous concert, with the envoys of Spain; he could not view their preſent fury, in any other light, but that of a direct revolt from all ties to their country; and an open contempt of his juriſdiction. He ſet out, immediately, from Laon; and, accompanied with a ſmall body of his troops, reached Paris. Before he arrived; a conſciouſneſs of guilt made the criminal offenders apprehenſive, about his intentions of vengeance *. To divert his dreaded indignation, ſome threats of greater ſedition, amongſt the populace, were thrown out; and various arguments, were urged by Ibarra, to convince the Duke of the imprudence, and danger of ſeverity; in ſo critical a ſituation of affairs. Mayenne heard thoſe arguments, with the compoſure of one in ſuſpenſe, and in ſome meaſure ſenſible of the force of them; and

Mayenne informed of this outrage;

* Preuves de ſatyre Menip. tom. 2. p. 203. D'Avila, ibid.

BOOK III.

1591.

shows remarkable spirit, in punishing the accomplices of it.

without discovering his resolutions, for several days; he took account of the military strength he could muster up, in the city. When he found it sufficient to overawe the seditious, he dissembled no longer; but sent his orders to Bussi-le-Clerc, one of the atrocious cabal, to deliver up the Bastille; and, upon his requesting some days to determine himself, he commanded some cannon to be drawn from the arsenal, and pointed against its gates. Upon assurance of being exempted from prosecution, about the murders; Bussi, quickly, surrendered his fortress. The warrants of the lieutenant-general were, then, issued for seizing the persons of the assassins of Brisson, and the other counsellors; and four of them, being taken; they were, without further process, conveyed into a low hall of the Louvre, and strangled by an executioner. Their bodies were, next day, exposed on a gibbet; and two other accomplices, in Brisson's death, were joined with them. The procedure of the Duke, equally cautious, and hardy, had converted all the emotions of their friends, into those of surprise, and consternation. Having suppressed, and, almost, extinguished the opposition of a faction, which had expelled Henry III. from his capital, and, by a signal exercise of justice, vindicated his own authority in Paris; the Duke of Mayenne published an amnesty, with some exceptions; and returned with deserved applause, to the army.

The more particular history of the military operations, in the provinces, would include a variety of actions; which ensued in Anjou, Britanny, Provence, Languedoc, and Champagne; and overspread France, with much the same combustion, and havock, as in other periods of the civil war. But the great preparations made by Henry IV. to finish the prosperous campaign of this year, by a signal enterprise, lead on the narrative, to the issue of the important, and interesting scene. It was the siege of Roüen, which, for some time past, being designed by Henry, required him to exert all his mili-

tary

1591.

tary ſtrength, and ability *. We ſee, ſtated in Cambden's hiſtory, and in other Engliſh records, the ſharp expoſtulations of Queen Elizabeth, againſt Henry; for his long delay of this undertaking; as well as on account of the inſufficient force, employed by him, for the protection of Britanny. It was the expulſion of the Spaniards, and the reduction of the power of the league, in thoſe maritime provinces, of France, that proved an additional incitement to Elizabeth; to engage †, with ſo great ardour, and at ſuch expence of her treaſure, in the ſupport of Henry. Punctual in the performance of all her treaties; ſhe had ſent over the Earl of Eſſex, into France, with the ſtipulated ſuccour of four thouſand ſoldiers; before the King had collected his forces, to begin the ſiege. Beſides various other impediments, that Henry found impoſſible to ſurmount, in the time fixed by him; he was obliged to wait the arrival of the army, raiſed for his ſervice, in Germany; and, what was not eaſily practicable to him, to provide money for the immediate payment of thoſe mercenaries; before they advanced from the frontiers. What his ſtraits were, in this reſpect; may be judged from the courſe taken to relieve them. Having, at this time, married the heireſs of Sedan, to the Viſcount of Turenne, who, then, became Duke of Bouillon; Henry borrowed the Princeſs's jewels; and pledged them, to raiſe money for the gratification of the Germans ‡. In the diſpoſal of this Princeſs to the Viſcount; the King, not only, rewarded his many former ſervices, and thoſe he had lately performed, in levying the German troops; but, alſo, diſappointed various unfriendly competitors, for the poſſeſſion of an important principality, bordering on France, and Germany; and oppoſed an active, and warlike chieftain, of his party, and religion, to the Duke of Lorain; always ambitious of reducing this territory, under his power. While Henry

After various delays, complained of by the Queen of England;

Henry prepares to beſiege Rouen;

* Cambden, ibid. b. 4. p. 450. Acta regia, tom. 4. p. 126. † Thuan. lib. 202. p. 200. D'Avila, lib. 12. ‡ Thuan. ibid. p. 198.

BOOK III.

1591.

shows remarkable spirit,

without discovering his resolutions, for several days; he took account of the military strength he could muster up, in the city. When he found it sufficient to overawe the seditious, he dissembled no longer; but sent his orders to Bussi-le-Clerc, one of the atrocious cabal, to deliver up the Bastille; and, upon his requesting some days to determine himself, he commanded some cannon to be drawn from the arsenal, and pointed against its gates. Upon assurance of being exempted from prosecution, about the murders; Bussi, quickly, surrendered his fortress. The warrants of the lieutenant-general were, then, issued for seizing the persons of the assassins of Brisson, and the other counsellors; and four of them, being taken; they were, without further process, conveyed into a low hall of the Louvre, and strangled by an executioner. Their bodies were, next day, exposed on a gibbet; and two other accomplices, in Brisson's death, were joined with them. The procedure of the Duke, equally cautious, and hardy, had converted all the emotions of their friends, into those of surprise, and consternation. Having suppressed, and, almost, extinguished the opposition of a faction, which had expelled Henry III. from his capital, and, by a signal exercise of justice, vindicated his own authority in Paris; the Duke of Mayenne published an amnesty, with some exceptions; and returned with deserved applause, to the army.

in punishing the accomplices of it.

The more particular history of the military operations, in the provinces, would include a variety of actions; which ensued in Anjou, Britanny, Provence, Languedoc, and Champagne; and overspread France, with much the same combustion, and havock, as in other periods of the civil war. But the great preparations made by Henry IV. to finish the prosperous campaign of this year, by a signal enterprise, lead on the narrative, to the issue of the important, and interesting scene. It was the siege of Roüen, which, for some time past, being designed by Henry, required him to exert all his military

1591.

After various delays, complained of by the Queen of England;

tary ſtrength, and ability *. We ſee, ſtated in Cambden's hiſtory, and in other Engliſh records, the ſharp expoſtulations of Queen Elizabeth, againſt Henry; for his long delay of this undertaking; as well as on account of the inſufficient force, employed by him, for the protection of Britanny. It was the expulſion of the Spaniards, and the reduction of the power of the league, in thoſe maritime provinces, of France, that proved an additional incitement to Elizabeth; to engage †, with ſo great ardour, and at ſuch expence of her treaſure, in the ſupport of Henry. Punctual in the performance of all her treaties; ſhe had ſent over the Earl of Eſſex, into France, with the ſtipulated ſuccour of four thouſand ſoldiers; before the King had collected his forces, to begin the ſiege. Beſides various other impediments, that Henry found impoſſible to ſurmount, in the time fixed by him; he was obliged to wait the arrival of the army, raiſed for his ſervice, in Germany; and, what was not eaſily practicable to him, to provide money for the immediate payment of thoſe mercenaries; before they advanced from the frontiers. What his ſtraits were, in this reſpect; may be judged from the courſe taken to relieve them. Having, at this time, married the heireſs of Sedan, to the Viſcount of Turenne, who, then, became Duke of Bouillon; Henry borrowed the Princeſs's jewels; and pledged them, to raiſe money for the gratification of the Germans ‡. In the diſpoſal of this Princeſs to the Viſcount; the King, not only, rewarded his many former ſervices, and thoſe he had lately performed, in levying the German troops; but, alſo, diſappointed various unfriendly competitors, for the poſſeſſion of an important principality, bordering on France, and Germany; and oppoſed an active, and warlike chieftain, of his party, and religion, to the Duke of Lorain; always ambitious of reducing this territory, under his power. While Hen-

Henry prepares to beſiege Rouen;

ry

* Cambden, ibid. b. 4. p. 450. Acta regia, tom. 4. p. 126. † Thuan. lib. 202. p. 200. D'Avila, lib. 12. ‡ Thuan. ibid. p. 198.

Book III.

1591.

to assist at which, the English auxiliaries arrive.

ry was employed in conducting those important affairs; the English arrived at Dieppe, and impatient of inactivity, for two months, expressed their dissatisfaction, and complaints. Sir Roger Williams, on the other hand, before Essex's arrival, had been easily prevailed on, by the King, to follow him, with his body of English troops, to the siege of Noyon, and other enterprises. The martial fame he acquired, made Essex, perhaps, still more discontented; so that Elizabeth, being acquainted with the transgression of her orders, by Williams, was provoked to write several angry letters to Henry. The security, for the repayment of her expences, being assigned on the revenues of Roüen, together with free commerce to it; she expressed great indignation at the King's delay of the siege; a circumstance, which was much more disadvantageous to his own affairs, and, by occasioning his failure in the reduction of the city, may be reckoned to have thrown the fortune of the kingdom, into a new state of suspense.

November.

Novemb. 11. Rouen being invested, various exploits ensue;

Having, at length, drawn together his forces; Henry invested Roüen with an army of above five and thirty thousand men; the largest he had ever commanded. The foreign troops were so much more numerous than the French, that they composed, almost, two thirds of the whole. The English, commanded by the Earl of Essex, Elizabeth's new favourite, amounted, with the volunteers, to six thousand picked soldiers. An accidental shot, in one of the first skirmishes, deprived the Earl's brother, Walter Devereux, of his life; a young nobleman of the finest accomplishments. The regret of his death *, by the Earl, and the whole troops, was such; that his body, embalmed, and deposited in a leaden coffin, was kept during all the time of the siege; with the view, as the English declared, of having it borne before them; when, after storming the breach

* Speed. history, b. 9. p. 1193. Thuan. ibid. p. 201.

1591. December.

breach of the walls, they ſhould enter by it, in triumph, into Roüen. But this event never happened; though the feats of valour, performed by parties of the French and Engliſh, equalled any former inſtances of their ſignal emulation of each other, in martial bravery. Queen Elizabeth's injunctions to Eſſex, not to expoſe her ſoldiers, to unneceſſary hazards, were little regarded by that youthful commander, and other Engliſh nobles that accompanied him; who, in ſuch a theatre of military action, ſought every opportunity of purchaſing renown *. Eſſex, who took ſome occaſion of ſending a challenge, to the Marquis of Villars, the governour of Roüen, offered to lodge himſelf, with a body of his troops, betwixt Fort St Catherine, and the city; which, by the French commanders, was pronounced to be impracticable †. At another time; the Engliſh, thinking their reputation had ſuffered by their being diſlodged from a trench, in a moſt unequal combat, requeſted leave, of Henry, to be the firſt aſſailants, in recovering it from the enemy. They obtained their deſire; diſlodged, with ſurpriſing boldneſs, their antagoniſts; and remained invincible, ever after, in their poſt. The proofs given, by Henry and his officers, of aſſiduous labour, diligence, and perſonal valour, were no leſs wonderful. In the extreme cold, and froſty ſeaſon of the year, ſeveral aſſaults of the enemy's works were given, at midnight; and in theſe, the Generals, and the ſoldiers, ſhared the ſame fatigues, and dangers. But their utmoſt efforts, proved of little ſignificance to the diſtreſſing of the town, or the inducing Villars to any thoughts of a ſurrender. No braver, or more reſolute perſon could have been placed in his charge, in executing which, his preparations, before the ſiege, and his military conduct, and vigilance, during its continuance, ſurpaſſed the general opinion entertained, of his courage, and abilities ‡.

in which the Engliſh diſtinguiſh their valour.

By the bravery of the governor the defence of the city is protracted;

He

* D'Avila, ibid. † Mem. de Sully, liv. 4. D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 14.
‡ Mem. de Sully, ibid.

Book III. 1591.

He confeſſed, tho' a paſſionate hater of heretics, that Henry merited many crowns, by his valour; and, at the ſame time, he acted like one that was proud of oppoſing, and rivalling the efforts of ſuch a warrior. Whether the ſlow progreſs, made in the ſiege, might be attributed to the directing the firſt attacks againſt the caſtle, which, with more advantage, might have been puſhed againſt the city itſelf; or whether, as Sully's Memoirs bear it, a diſpoſition to protract the war, and embarraſs Henry, ſtill prevailed amongſt a diſcontented, and invidious party of his catholic officers; this unfortunate event took place. After five months were conſumed in fruitleſs toils, time and opportunity were given, to the Duke of Mayenne, to engage his foreign auxiliaries to ſend an army to the relief of Roüen.

till the Spaniſh army comes to the relief of the town.

It required no ſmall induſtry, firmneſs, and patience, on the part of the Duke of Mayenne, to keep his affairs in an amicable train, with his foreign allies, and to adjuſt, with mutual ſatisfaction, the plan of their political and military operations. The difficulties he had to ſurmount, on this head, were the cauſe of his making no attempt to interrupt the ſiege of Roüen, and that he contented himſelf with throwing into it five hundred men, commanded by his ſon; before the blockade was compleated. To other inſtances which have been given, of the political miſunderſtanding between him, and the court of Spain *; a particular occaſion of diſagreement was now ſubjoined. It was the intention of the Spaniſh miniſters, and the ſcheme of the Duke of Parma himſelf, that his next march into France ſhould be conducive, not to a particular advantage in the field only; but to the great ſcheme of the aſſembly of the ſtates of the league, and the election of the Infanta to the royal dignity. Eagerly bent on this project; Taxis, and Ibarra, already at variance

The Spaniſh faction endeavours to act on a political plan.

* Thuan. lib. 102. p. 203. D'Avila, liv. 12.

1591.

ance with the Duke of Mayenne, inſiſted to carry it into execution; without regard to his concurrence. The Pariſian faction, ſubſervient to their purpoſes, and other chiefs of the league, allured or bribed to their intereſt, were declared by them to be more ingenuous and tractable, and no leſs ſufficient aſſociates, for accompliſhing their deſign. But Parma, having little confidence in the haſty judgments, and bold aſſeverations of thoſe violent agents, would enter into no concert, or negotiation; ſeparate from the Duke of Mayenne's participation in it. Wiſe to foreſee the danger of treating with the diſhonourable, and the baſer claſs of the ſtate, and, in ſome meaſure, diſdaining it; he choſe, rather, to win the Duke of Mayenne, to his maſter's intereſt, by ſome compliances. Previous to his requeſted march into France, he demanded, chiefly, that La Fere in Picardy ſhould be given him, as a retreat, and an arſenal for his artillery; and referred the conteſted point about the aſſembly of the ſtates, to a conference, amongſt the miniſters, on both ſides. Jeanin, and La Chaſtre, inſtructed by the Duke of Mayenne, again underſtood how to divert this diſagreeable propoſal; by alledging that time was requiſite to obtain the conſent of the chiefs of the league, to the breach of the Salic law, in the kingdom; which being agreed on, the election of the Infanta, by the ſtates, would enſue, without difficulty. After conſiderable heſitation, which ſhowed Mayenne's nice attention to honour; la Fere was yielded by him, to the Spaniſh general; who, inſiſting, no further, on the convocation of the ſtates, began to advance, with his army, towards Normandy.

ſeparate from the Duke of Mayenne, which Parma diſapproves.

The return of the Duke of Parma into France, with an army of thirteen thouſand Spaniſh troops, which were joined by near as many French or Italians; renewed the conteſt for ſuperiority, between the oppoſite parties; and the emulation for military renown, between Henry, and Alexander Farneze. There were no two gene-

Decem. 21.

Book III.

1592. January.

rals, in that period, who could be ranked with them. The campaign, which now opened between them, was much more ſignalized than the former, by a variety of rencounters, and exploits; tho' ſtill without a general engagement; and it was the laſt, in which the Duke of Parma gave proof of his admirable talents. The ſeries of combats, that enſued in it, is not eaſily reduced into order; and cannot be well comprehended within the bounds of a contracted narrative *. It is, juſtly, obſerved by the annotator on Sully's Memoirs, that ſeveral of the moſt important actions, particulariſed in them, are, confuſedly, blended together; without ſufficient, or proper, diſtinctions of the intervals of time. The more enlarged hiſtories, when conſulted, appear, in ſeveral points, contradictory to each other. But, from the moſt regular view that can be taken of the capital facts and incidents, which are fully aſcertained; the following ſhort ſketch of them may be adopted.

By the return of Parma into France,

the campaign recommences;

From habitual activity, in the field, and his conſtant maxim, never to ſlip an opportunity of harraſſing the enemy; Henry put himſelf at the head of eight thouſand of his cavalry; and †, leaving the ſiege of Rouen to the Marſhal Biron's conduct, proceeded to obſerve,

January 29.

and watch the motions of the Duke of Parma. This general, taking the longeſt road, by Amiens, was, ſcarcely yet, advanced beyond the Somme: But, in the beginning of February, the light troops, and couriers, of both armies, came to frequent encounters with each other ‡. In one of theſe, the King, by his vigilance, and his alert motions, ſurpriſed the Duke of Guiſe, who came, with a large ſquadron, to take up the quarters of the vanguard, commanded by him; and cut off almoſt the whole party, and put the reſt to flight; with the loſs of their ſtandards, and baggage. It was

* Ibid. liv. 4. † D'Aubigné, chap. 15. D'Avila, ibid. ‡ Mem. de Sully, liv. 4.

1592. in which the combat of Aumale, and other rencounters enſue.

was within a few days after, that Henry's daring and dangerous enterpriſe, at Aumale, happened. It is impoſſible to aſſign any other motive, or aim, in it; but that having once advanced too far, in order to reconnoitre Parma's army; Henry could not reſtrain his ardour, ſo as to part from the enemy, without a blow. His conſideration, and coolneſs, however, appeared, in the regard he ſhowed to the ſafety of his troops; tho' he diſcovered none for his own. All his ſquadrons, except a troop of a hundred horſe, were retired, out of danger; before he ventured on this ſtrange exploit. But, tho' nothing could exceed the teſtimony it gave of his matchleſs valour, tho' he ſtood the hoteſt charge of the enemy, and, when wounded, put himſelf in the rear to ſave his ſoldiers; the extreme hazard of the enterpriſe drew upon him a ſevere reflection, from Parma *. When told that, by his exceſſive caution, he had miſſed the opportunity of deſtroying the King, or taking him priſoner, "I would act the ſame part again, ſaid he; upon the ſuppoſition I made, that I had to do with a General of an army, and not with a Captain of light horſe; which I now find the King of Navarre to be." Henry himſelf called it the error of Aumale; and it was a great one, to imagine that he could confront the Duke of Parma's whole army, with a handful of men; and not expoſe himſelf to the utmoſt danger †. The march of the Spaniſh army, was the moſt perfect model of military order, and cautious arrangement. Preſenting the form of a *trape zion*, or wedge with an angle in front; the infantry, in cloſe files, marched before the ſquadrons of heavy cavalry. One opening in the front, covered from view, by ſome advanced troops, afforded a ſpace, for ſome regiments, to iſſue forth, to the combat; and two others, on the rear angles, ſerved the ſame purpoſe. Cloſed, upon the two ſides, by the baggage-waggons, and chariots, which were flanked by all the carabineers, or light

* D'Avila, ibid. † D'Aubigné, ibid.

Book III. horſe of the army; the whole became one compacted body; as impenetrable to the attacks of an enemy, as a fortified camp *. In this invariable poſture of defence, Parma marched his army, thro' the day; and, where-ever its quarters were, covered it with ſome artificial entrenchments, at night. Before ſun-riſe, and a careful diſcovery of the country, he never, or rarely, put his troops in motion; and avoided, with equal diligence, the prolonging of his march, beyond the hours of broad day-light.

1592.

The caution of Parma is oppoſed to Henry's activity in the field;

To combat an antagoniſt, whoſe precaution and foreſight were ſo great, and whoſe triumph it was to avoid any hazardous action; appeared to be an inſuperable taſk. Yet, under diſadvantages, from the army he commanded; Henry's amazing alacrity, and diligence, ſeemed equal to it. Parma was made ſenſible of this, by ſeveral narrow eſcapes from danger; and was, often, obliged to proceed, like one that feared a blow †. This was apparent by the countermarch he made, towards the Somme; during a ſhort abſence of the Duke of Mayenne; without whoſe advice, he would not venture to advance forward, in a country which could not be always ſufficiently explored by him ‡. He alſo, oppoſed the ſcheme of the French general officers, for the relief of Roüen, by dividing the army into two bodies; and for employing one of them, to keep the King in action; while the other ſhould penetrate, through the Marſhal Biron's lines, into the town. But the diſaſter, which happened at the ſiege of that place, turned the balance of the campaign, to a great degree, in favour of the Spaniſh general. By a ſeaſonable, and well conducted ſally, from Roüen, with the moſt part of the garriſon; Villars had cut in pieces five hundred of the beſieging troops, demoliſhed their advanced trenches, ſpiked ſeveral cannon, and ſpoiled, or blown up, a large quantity of powder and ammunition.

but the ſucceſs of the latter is interrupted, by a diſaſter at the ſiege of Rouen, February 27.

To

* D'Avila, ibid. † D'Aubigné, ibid. ‡ Thuan. lib. 102. p. 207.

To repair this misfortune, Henry was obliged to return in haſte, to his camp, before the city; where he found affairs, in ſuch a ſituation, that he judged it more neceſſary to provide againſt a ſurpriſe, from the enemy's approach, in the midſt of this confuſion of his army, than to advance the ſiege. As a melancholy proof to him, what ſudden perturbation, ſeparate from the diſaſters of war, it was liable to; a controverſy had ariſen, about the promiſcuous burial of the catholicks and proteſtants, killed together, in the late ſlaughter. In the council of war, held by the enemy; the Duke of Parma propoſed to take all advantage of the perplexity created by that misfortune, and to attack the camp of the royaliſts, before Roüen. But, when this commander made this his firſt motion to engage in a general action; the Duke of Mayenne employed the ſame prudent arguments, formerly uſed by Parma himſelf, to oppoſe it; and, from this diſagreement, and other colliſions which enſued, it appeared, that diſtruſt, and jealouſy, of each other's views, had taken place, betwixt thoſe chieftains; and was extended amongſt the French and Spaniſh officers. It ſeemed to be the particular aim of the former, that the Duke of Parma ſhould not find the opportunity of entering into Roüen, triumphantly, with his army *; and the letters Villars wrote, about his ſecurity, were an evidence of his adopting the ſentiments of his countrymen. The deliberations terminated, in throwing a reinforcement of eight hundred ſoldiers into Roüen; and the Duke of Parma, as if he had effectuated all his purpoſes, withdrew with his army, to the other ſide of the Somme.

which place is reinforced by Parma; March 18.

Though Henry was obliged to diſmiſs ſome part of his troops, and grant leave to ſeveral of the nobility to retire, and to quarter the bodies of his cavalry, at ſome diſtance; the ſiege was renewed by

* Thuan. ibid. p. 209. D'Avila, ibid.

BOOK III.

1592. March 24.

by him, and carried on, with more vigour, than in the firſt blockade *. By the help of above forty ſhips, ſent to the mouth of the Seine by the States of Holland, under the command of Count Philip of Naſſau; the ſtores and ammunition, wanted by his troops, were not only copiouſly ſupplied; but the towns, on the river, were ſo begirt, that Roüen was reduced to great ſtraits; and ſome veſſels were employed in battering it from the Seine. Villars, changing his language, wrote to the generals of the army, that, unleſs he were relieved before the 20th of April; he would be forced to capitulate. Parma, knowing that this commander's fortitude would not permit him to magnify his ſtraits; marched thirty leagues, in four days; and arrived within two miles of Roüen; to the amazement of thoſe, who compared the celerity of this expedition, with the tardineſs of his former march, from the Somme †. According to D'Avila, his retreat was a ſtratagem, to ſurpriſe Henry's camp; before he could be joined by the diſperſed bodies of his cavalry ‡. But it appeared by the event, that the King had taken the moſt cautious meaſures, for the ſpeedy reaſſemblage of them; and the utmoſt that the Duke of Parma could effectuate, by his return, was, the obliging Henry to decamp, from his quarters before Roüen; and to quit the ſiege. This‖ was done, in ſuch order, and by means of various manoeuvres, in the Duke's own military ſtyle, performed by the Viſcount of Turenne; that all the endeavours, employed by the former, to obſtruct the retreat of the royal army, or to force Henry to a diſadvantageous action, proved ineffectual.

and the ſiege is diſcontinued by Henry.

At length, it was manifeſted, that the prudence, and circumſpection of the wiſeſt, in the province of their genius, will, ſometimes, fail them. From the view of compleating the deliverance of Roüen; the Duke of Parma being drawn to the ſiege of Caudebec, fell into

a

* Thuan. lib. 103. p. 211. † Ibid. ‡ Thuan. ibid. Sully. ‖ D'Aubigné, ibid.

a more groſs error than that of Henry's at Aumale *. He, unwarrily, entangled his army, within the narrow diſtrict of the county of Caux; a peninſula, formed between the Seine, on one hand, and the ſea on the other; and, before he could reduce the town to a ſurrender, and extricate himſelf from his dangerous ſituation †; Henry came, with the main body of his army, and ſhut up his paſſage. Without any bridge over the river, expoſed to have all his convoys of proviſions intercepted, and to be aſſaulted, at the pleaſure of the enemy, in his ſtraitened quarters; Parma ſaw his army on the point of being ſtarved, or vanquiſhed, by the royal forces. Every thing that his military ſkill could dictate, or his bravery inſpire, to accompliſh its ruin, was performed by Henry. From ‡ the firſt of May, to the tenth; a ſeries of cloſe and vigorous attacks was puſhed on by him, and executed with, almoſt, continual advantage. Parma's lodgements of his troops, which he was conſtrained to extend beyond his entrenched camp, or to connect with it, by barricades, were either totally overpowered, or beat back into the incumbered ground of the main body. In the midſt of ſcarcity of bread, and want of every convenience, for the refreſhment of the ſoldiers; diſeaſes began to prevail in the camp; and Parma, from a feſtering, and incurable wound he had received at Caudebec, lay often confined to his bed; and could, with difficulty, be carried forth, in a litter. His vanguard was now aſſaulted by the King, and received a conſiderable blow. Under the favour of a cloudy day, and ſome feints made by him; Parma ſhifted his ground, nearer the walls of Caudebec. Still placed in much the ſame difficulties; he found no poſſible method of ſaving his army from impending deſtruction, but by the paſſage of the Seine; an undertaking, in itſelf, perilous, in the higheſt degree; and which, by any other commander,

1592. Parma, by an unwary motion of his army, April 29.

May 10.

brings it into extreme danger;

from which, after various aſſaults and ſufferings, May 18.

* D'Aubigné, ibid. D'Avila, liv. 13.
† Thuan. ibid. p. 214.
‡ D'Aubigné, chap. 16.

Book III. 1592.

mander, would have been deemed impracticable. The apparent impoſſibility of it, contributed to its ſucceſs. Without ſuch a deſign being, in the leaſt, ſuſpected by Henry, or his officers; he found opportunity to collect a number of boats, from Roüen, and, having, with that art, of which he was a perfect maſter, conſtructed them into a bridge; he paſſed over, in a few hours of night, his whole army, artillery, and baggage, undiſcovered, and without any diſaſter, or accident. The great breadth of the Seine, in that quarter, made the ſpectacle of his eſcape, next morning, in ſuch a way, appear to his diſappointed adverſaries, like a prodigy. Thrown from aſtoniſhment, into a perplexity of counſels; Henry and his generals loſt ſome opportunity of annoying him *. By a conſequent eruption of diſcontent, which, generally, attended any croſs adventure in Henry's army; his motion, to intercept Parma's march towards Paris, by ſeizing the Pont de l'Arche, that might have been executed, with ſmall difficulty, was fruſtrated. Purſuing his rout, with as few halts as poſſible; the Duke paſſed the Seine, at St Clod; and reached the town of Chateau Thierry; which ſecured his return, by Champagne, into Flanders.

He amazingly eſcapes,

and returns to Flanders.

In this manner, did one of the greateſt commanders of his age, effectuate his retreat; and attain the higheſt applauſes of his military conduct; when he ventured, contrary to the moſt invariable rule of war, to paſs a large river, not only, within ſight of a ſuperior enemy; but when he was, in a great meaſure, beſieged by them. Henry, in his indignation, ſaid, "that the beſt retreat, was but a flight;" and, to add to his mortification, found himſelf under a neceſſity to break up his army. He only retained ſuch a body of troops, as compoſed a flying camp. Part of them being ſent, under Biron's conduct, to recover the town of Eſpernai; this famous Marſhal, to whom Henry, in his military counſels, paid the greateſt deference, was killed at the ſiege.

CHAP.

* Mem. de Sully, ibid.

CHAP. III.

View of the Power of the League.——Convention of its States.——Conference of the oppoſite Parties.——Henry's Converſion to the catholic Church.——Procedure and Conteſts of the States of the League.——Ceremony of Henry's Abſolution performed at St Denis.——Virulence of the incendiary Preachers againſt him.——Efforts of the Legate, and the Partizans of the League to ſupport their declining Power.——Publication of the Satyre Menippée.——Pope Clement's oppoſition to Henry.——His Aſſaſſination attempted by Barriere.

General view of the ſtate of the league;

WHEN, after the view of the moſt material events, in the field, the political negotiations come to be conſidered; it may appear, that Henry's affairs drew near to ſome proſperous iſſue. The conferences often held, in ſecrecy, and ſome times without regard to it, betwixt Villeroy, and Du Pleſſis Mornay, the agents of peace, on both ſides, ſeemed an evident ſign, that the Duke of Mayenne wiſhed, ſincerely, to put an end to the war, hitherto unſucceſsful, with Henry; on the ſuppoſition that he could obtain ſuch ſecurities, for himſelf, and his principal adherents, as he reckoned might be granted to them. His experience of the caprice, and haughty pretenſions of the Spaniſh miniſters, to ſubject him, and the league, to the will of their maſter, as well as the ſenſe he had of the precarioufneſs, and danger of a conſtant dependence on foreign aid, were ſufficient to determine him, to prefer this meaſure. At this period *; what he perceived with reſpect to the inclination of the court of Spain, to raiſe up his nephew the Duke of Guiſe as a ri-

* D'Avila, liv. 13.

Book III. 1592.

rival to him, in authority, and to attribute every atchievement, in the campaign, to the ſupplies of their treaſure, and the glory of their arms, contributed to confirm him in this diſpoſition. After various propoſitions, that ſhowed it; the formal ſketch of a treaty *, drawn up, with his approbation, by Jeanin, and Villeroy, in name of the league, was preſented to Henry; in which the conditions of their ſubmiſſion to him were preſcribed. Even Philip II. had tried, by applying to that Prince, to attain his end of diſmembering France, and indemnifying himſelf for all his expences, in a ſhorter, and more direct way; than that of maintaining the league. In the metropolis, ſince the Duke of Mayenne's chaſtiſement of the ſeditious zealots; the government of the city had reverted more to a regular form. The citizens, of better rank, began to reſume their place in the military and civil offices. The ſixteen, and their aſſociates, being, generally, excluded in the elections to the magiſtracy, and to the charges in the different wards; and prohibited, under a penal ordinance, from their irregular aſſemblies; remained with little or no ſhadow of their former domination. Though, by the channel of the Sorbonne, and the aid of the preachers, they ſtill endeavoured to vent their turbulent petitions and clamours; they found them treated with manifeſt diſregard and ſcorn. Such was the anſwer, given by the council of the league, to the article of their memorial, which requeſted, that it ſhould be added to the oath of union, "to enter into no accommodation or treaty with the King of Navarre †. The King's friends, and the politicians, on the contrary, were ſo much encouraged by this change; that, amongſt other free ſpeeches, in the city-hall, ſome declared for ſending a deputation to him, and delivering the city from the thraldom of the Spaniſh garriſon.

in which Henry's ſuperiority over it might be preſumed.

With

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 5. Ibid. liv. 4. Preuves de la Satyre Menip. tom. 3. p. 528.

† Thuan. lib. 103. p. 227. D'Aubigne, chap. 20.

1592.

With reſpect to the court of Rome itſelf, appearances were not, altogether, unfavourable for Henry. The advancement of Cardinal Aldobrandino, to the purple, under the name of Clement VIII, at an age, more firm and vigorous, than that of any of his predeceſſors, promiſed a more temperate, judicious, and ſteady exerciſe of the pontifical authority; than what had been ſeen, under Sixtus Quintus, or Gregory XIV. The attention which Henry ſhowed, to improve this auſpicious conjuncture, and to employ the propereſt means, to abate the violent prejudices, or diſarm the wrath of the conclave, againſt him, might, alſo, be ſuppoſed to operate in his behalf. His conduct, in this reſpect, was a ſignal proof of his judgment, and moderate temper *. Contrary to the indignant declarations of the parliament of Tours, and Chalons; he determined to ſend an embaſſy to Rome; and, by the choice of the Marquiſs of Piſani, in concert with the Cardinal Gondi, to execute it, he ſtudied to obtain a favourable audience. As the treaty was, then, managed, with the agents of the league; he ſolicited, and obtained, the promiſe of their aſſiſtance. With the ſame temperate procedure, he rejected the inſtances of Renald de Beaulne, Archbiſhop of Bourges, tho' one of his moſt zealous adherents, for nominating a Patriarch of France, to have the ſuperintendance, and government of the eccleſiaſtical ſtate; and, with the advice of the ableſt counſellors, he framed ſuch temporary regulations, for preventing diſorder and abuſes, in promotions to the benefices, and dignities of the church, and the orderly adminiſtration of the dioceſes; that the moſt rigid catholicks themſelves had reaſon to be ſatisfied, with the propriety of them.

Henry's conduct with reſpect to the court of Rome,

diſcovers his prudence.

But this aſpect of the ſmooth train of Henry's affairs, was far from being a fixed, or determined one. From the leaſt derangement

* Thuan. ibid. p. 222. D'Avila, ibid.

BOOK III.

1592.

From the unsettled and variable aims of parties,

of the incidents, which conspired to form it, the greatest variation might ensue; and, from the fluctuating aims and hopes of the parties, with whom he had to deal; the very reverse, of what their present conduct promised, might take place. The negociations, with the Duke of Mayenne, were carried on, in a manner, so reserved, and ambiguous, upon his part; as created great doubts, with respect to his real intentions *. To gain time, or to render the Spaniards more compliant to him; or to feign, for the sake of credit with the moderate catholicks, no aversion to peace; seemed to be as much, or more, the motives of his conduct; than any disposition he had, to enter into an accommodation with the King. At length, the conditions proposed in the treaty, by Jeanin, too much verified this construction of the Duke's aim in it. They were of the stamp of those arrogant demands, which the partizans of the league had made on Henry III.; with additional impositions; which could not be accepted with any honour, or safety to the royal authority. Being rejected, with some coldness, by Henry; the parties became more alienated, from one another; by endeavouring each of them to justify their procedure †. The scheme of conciliating the favour of the court of Rome was obstructed. All the endeavours used by the Cardinal Gondi, to apologize to the Pope for his own conduct, and to procure the admission of the Marquis de Pisani, to an audience, were hardly effectual to the former of these purposes; and, not till after the intervention of some time, and various difficulties, was the latter of them attained. Clement VIII, however well disposed to moderate measures, was not yet, at liberty, to act upon his own judgment of the affairs of France ‡. Obliged to keep matters, for some time, in a tenour, similar to that which was followed by his predecessors, and to testify, on his first elevation to the papal chair, his propensity to support the dignity of his apostolic function; he approved

and the ambiguous procedure of the Pope;

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 4. † D'Avila, ibid. ‡ Thuan. ibid. p. 226.

1592.

approved the meaſure, which the agents of the league, and the Spaniſh miniſters had ſolicited; for aſſembling the ſtates of France; in order that they might proceed to the election of a catholic King; and one, who was an enemy to hereſy. In the brief to his legate; he expreſſed his abhorrence of the choice of one, who perſiſted in his errors; but avoided to name the King of Navarre, under this character. It is *, alſo, ſaid that he ſent, by his nephew, to the Cardinal Sega, ſuch ſecret inſtructions, as he thought ſufficient to direct him, to the moſt cautious, and pacific conduct. But the import of his public mandate, coinciding with the purpoſe of the partizans of the league; his diſpoſition to favour them was not doubted. The publication of the bull, and the legate's comments upon it, produced all the effect that they deſired. The ſpirit of party was revived, with new ardour; and the minds of the factious chiefs were, again bent on the grand purpoſe of the election of a catholic King of France, by the ſtates; an object which flattered their ambition, and rouſed the zeal of their popular adherents.

the ſpirit of the league is ſupported,

Before proceeding to relate the ſingular, and intereſting, event of the aſſembly of the ſtates of the league; it may be proper to mention, in general, the condition of Henry's affairs, in the remoter provinces of the kingdom. Tho' they were not, equally proſperous in all places; the fortune that attended the efforts of his friends was ſuch, as might have checked his adverſaries, in their preſumptuous ſcheme, of ſuperſeding his rights to the crown; and ſubſtituting an elected King in the room of him, who had a legitimate title to the throne. In Dauphiny, and in Provence; Leſdiguieres proved an indefatigable and ſucceſsful combatant, both againſt the forces of the league, and thoſe of the Duke of Savoy †. He carried the war, beyond the Alps, into the territories of the latter; and, by

Military affairs of the remoter provinces,

* D'Avila, ibid.

† Ibid.

Book III.

1593.

by the bold aſſault of ſeveral towns, and fortreſſes, made ſuch a diverſion, as reſtrained the Duke from making incurſions into either of thoſe provinces. The Duke of Eſpernon, having marched his forces into Provence, alſo, contributed to the ſubjection of various towns of it, to his government. The King's affairs, likewiſe, wore a proſperous aſpect, in Languedoc, and Gaſcony; eſpecially, after a ſignal defeat given to the Duke of Joyeuſe's troops, when employed in beſieging the fortreſs of Villemur, near Montauban. Joyeuſe himſelf periſhed *, with two thouſand of his ſoldiers; in endeavouring to paſs the river Tarn, upon a ſlight bridge. In Britanny, as has been obſerved, the loſs of the battle of Craon, which was followed by other unfortunate incidents, gave ſuch advantage to the Duke of Mercoeur, and the Spaniards, that the affairs of that province remained, for a long time, embroiled. On the ſide of Lorain; the Duke of Bouillon had gained conſiderable advantages, againſt the adverſaries of his eſtabliſhment, in Sedan; ſo that the King experienced the good effects of the match with the heireſs of it, which he had made, for that chieftain. The diviſions alſo, that prevailed among the political party of the league, and the zealots, were, in ſome degree, conducive to the King's intereſt; which upon a general ſurvey, appeared manifeſtly, to be the moſt predominant, and powerful one.

The project of the convention of the States of the leaegue,

The project of aſſembling the ſtates, is ſaid to have been ſuggeſted, to the confederates, by the Duke of Parma; and it muſt be owned, that his political capacity, and his ſkill, in the conduct of great affairs, was remarkably, apparent from this artful counſel. It was the reſolution, which, if properly purſued, was more likely, than any other, to build up the ſyſtem of the league; and to communicate to it, all the ſtability, and vigour, that could render it permanent

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 5.

1593.

manent in itſelf; and pernicious to the King's intereſt. Upon his plan of it; this conſequence would have been inevitable, as well as the attainment of the point, he had in view; with reſpect to the election of the Infanta, or of a King, altogether in the intereſt of Spain *. The place fixed on, by him, for the meeting of the ſtates, and the means he deſigned to employ, in order to render them ſubſervient to his deſigns; were well adapted to the ſucceſsful iſſue of them. By liberalities, judiciouſly, beſtowed among the leading men in the ſtates; by the preſent awe of his army, in the neighbourhood of their aſſembly, at Soiſſons, or Rheims; and by his own ſagacious, and alert management of the conjuncture, he propoſed to execute his ſcheme, and bring all debates to a final, and ſpeedy concluſion. But this General lived not, to conduct theſe meaſures he had concerted; and, after his death, which happened at Arras, on the ſecond of December; his intentions and purpoſes could not be proſecuted with the ſame advantage. On the † contrary; the diſtractions, in the Belgic affairs, which enſued upon it, and the mutinies in the Spaniſh army, retarded the execution of the enterpriſe upon France; and, in ſome meaſure, varied the whole ſcene of it. Several chieftains of the league, being damped in their hopes, began to alter their views. The Duke of Mayenne himſelf, upon the removal of one, who rivalled his authority, and intereſt, among the confederates, and obſcured his reputation in the army; was induced to cheriſh more ſanguine hopes of his aſcendency. It appeared, by his inſiſting for the aſſembling of the ſtates in Paris, that he meant to guard againſt their being overawed by the army of Spain; and he found no difficulty, when the Duke of Parma was gone, in carrying this material point; the conſequence of which was not fully apprehended by the other Spaniſh miniſters ‡. It is, alſo, ſaid, with

artfully contrived by Parma,

is rendered leſs formidable by his death.

1592. December 2.

* Mem. de Sully, ibid. † D'Aubigne, chap. 20. Thuan. lib. 105. p. 290.
‡ P. Daniel, tom. 9. p. 631.

Book III. 1591.

with great probability, that he who was, formerly, averſe to the reſolution of conveening the ſtates, and had appeared to favour the motions of peace with the King, diſcovered, now, no apprehenſion, with regard to the firſt meaſure; and ſhowed himſelf much more alienated from the other.

Various judgments on the conſequences of the meeting of the ſtates are formed in the King's council;

The convocation of the ſtates of the league, though leſs formidable after Parma's death, ſtruck ſeveral of the King's adherents with ſurpriſe, and anxiety about the conſequence of their reſolutions *. Others affected to deride this tumultuary, and unſeaſonable aſſembly of the repreſentatives of a party, under the name or ſhew, of the national one; when arms, and not political diſcuſſions and debates, could be reckoned, only effectual, to advance them to that ſtate of ſuperiority; neceſſary to decide the fate of the crown. Such alſo accounted it the ſubterfuge of a weak and divided party; which was obliged to comply with the propoſals of their foreign auxiliaries; however extravagant. But ſome of the more conſiderate, and penetrating of the King's friends, who were not impreſſed with much dread of the efficacy of the conſultations of the ſtates, thought their aſſembly might be turned to ſuch an iſſue; as would perpetuate the combuſtion of the kingdom; and long obſtruct Henry's eſtabliſhment on the throne. It was certain, that this was the aim of the Spaniſh court, and one certain advantage which Philip expected to reap from all his intrigues and efforts; though his other particular ſchemes ſhould fail him. Upon this view of things; it was their opinion and advice to the King, that the catholic peers and lords of his party ſhould, with his permiſſion, be allowed to enter into a conference, with thoſe of the ſtates of the league. This advice, which, in the firſt conception of it, ſeemed an improper, and dangerous condeſcenſion, was, in reality, the

where a wiſe expedient for a conference with the catholic partizans is formed.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 303.

1593. where a wiſe expedient, for a conference with the catholic partizans is propoſed.

the reſult of the moſt ſedate deliberation, and refined judgment. To render that meeting of the ſtates, which was held with the view of alienating, in the moſt irreconcilable manner, a great and powerful body of the King's ſubjects from their allegiance to him, an occaſion of an amicable conference, for the general good of France; was certainly gaining a point of conſiderable advantage. The terms in which the Duke of Mayenne thought fit to expreſs himſelf, in the declaration he publiſhed, about the convention of the States, not only afforded ground for this ſcheme; but authoriſed it. Whether, from intention to keep the tract of accommodation with Henry ſtill open to himſelf, or to teſtify, in the ſtrongeſt words, his regard for the peace of the kingdom; he had invited the catholicks of the King's party, to come to the aſſembly of the ſtates, and to confer with their countrymen and friends, upon the means of their union, and the reſtoration of the national peace and ſafety *. It was the reading of this clauſe in the Duke's manifeſto, that ſuggeſted the thought of a happy improvement of it, to two of the wiſeſt, and moſt loyal of Henry's counſellors; Gaſper de Schomberg, Count de Nanteuil, and the Preſident de Thou. The King, always ready to examine, with coolneſs, any rational propoſal, was immediately convinced by them, of the political propriety of the conference; and the expedient being approved by the reſt of the council; it was determined to draw up, in writing, the propoſitions for it; and to tranſmit them, by a trumpet, to the Count de Belin, governor of Paris.

It was no wonder that Henry, whoſe ideas of ſuch an aſſembly, as that of the ſtates †, were, naturally, higher than it merited, and who, as a King, deſired to avoid an unjuſt and preſumptuous rejection of his title to the crown; ſhould have been thus diſpoſed to

* Thuan. ibid. D'Avila.

† Mem. de Sully, liv. 5.

Book III. 1593.

try ſome meaſure, which might prevent, or leſſen the dreaded evil. To behold the moſt public and ſolemn condemnation of his right, carried on under the ſanction of the ſovereign Pontiff, and in the popular name of the States; was a moſt gloomy and alarming proſpect. His enemies, thus aſſembled, were animated againſt him; ſome by ambition; others by fanatical zeal; many by views of intereſt; and the reſt by various combinations of theſe motives. The ſpirit of faction, the power of intrigue, and the ſudden turn of party-aims, might bring them to a temporary unanimity. An election of a King, though obtained only by the ſuffrages, and acclamations of a day, was ſufficient to have founded the claim of a competitor for the throne, in the eyes of many; and the ſupport of his right, by the Pope, would have had the greateſt influence in degrading that of Henry.

Procedure of Henry in oppoſition to the ſtates of the league.

To ſuch an unhappy paſs might this Prince, ſo worthy of the ſcepter, believe his affairs reduced, by the preſent efforts and procedure of his enemies. Yet, though Henry agreed to the advice given him, in order to ſlacken the fire of the States; he took care not to ſhew himſelf in the leaſt affraid of them *. On the contrary, by a vigorous, and well penned declaration, he condemned their aſſembly as an unlawful invaſion of his prerogative, pronounced their acts null and void; and the pretended conſtituents of the States guilty of high treaſon. In this, as in other publications, he confuted the objections of his adverſaries, about his obſtinate continuance in hereſy; which, at this time, he alledged, were more injuriouſly thrown out againſt him; when the agents of the league obſtructed his ſolicitation of an audience, at the court of Rome.

The States of the league, ſo memorable in hiſtory, were convocated by the Duke of Mayenne's declaration, or mandate; which was followed by a letter from the Cardinal of Placentia, the Pope's legate;

* D'Aubigné, ibid. De Serres, fol. edit. p. 86c.

1593.

legate; addreſſed to the catholicks of the King's party. There was a remarkable difference in the ſtrain of theſe two papers: The laſt of them being adapted to the aim and ſpirit of the moſt violent faction of the league, renounced all reconciliation with Henry. The other was conceived in terms of conſiderable reſerve and moderation. The hall of the Louvre * was the place choſen for the aſſembly of the States; and their firſt meeting enſued on the 26th of January. They were compared, by the royaliſts, to the antient eſtates of Troyes; which were conveened to deprive Charles VII. of the crown, and beſtow it on a foreign prince. As there were preſent no princes of the blood, nor great officers of the crown, but their room appeared to be ſupplied by the Papal, Spaniſh, and other foreign agents; the aſpect of the aſſembly was abundantly exotic and ſtrange. The harangue of the Cardinal Pellevé, which followed that of the Duke of Mayenne, was, in reality, a true piece of burleſque on all public oratory; and furniſhed notable ground for the ridiculous and farſical colouring given it in the *Satyre Menippée*. His chief † text, taken from the feſtival of St Paul's converſion, and which he was obliged to accommodate to that of St Polycarp, the day on which the States met; his ſilly, and tedious digreſſions; his uſe of trite, and common-place ſentences, which he applied, with the liberty of old age, to particular perſons in the aſſembly; were the comical ornaments of his oration, which produced a mixture of ſpleen and laughter. Unfortunately, likewiſe, the other ſpeeches, made in this opening of the States, ſeemed to be void of ſcope or view; and to come from men, who as little underſtood their own purpoſes, as they were acquainted with thoſe of their aſſociates. The arrival of the King's meſſenger in Paris, with his packet, which has been mentioned, rouſed them out of this unſeemly languor, that diſcouraged their friends, the Pariſians.

Convention of the ſtates of the league, January 26.

and the harangues in their aſſembly burleſqued.

January 28.

* Remarques ſur la Satyre Menip. tom. 2. p. 23.

† Thuan. lib. 105. p. 315.

Book III.

1593.

The title of this diſpatch, when peruſed in the Duke of Mayenne's lodgings, before the legate, and other miniſters, excited great curioſity. It was inſcribed; *The propoſitions of the catholic Princes and Lords of the* King's *council, to the Duke of Mayenne, and the aſſembly, at Paris;* and might be ſuppoſed to import ſome change in their ſentiments; or what was introductory to it. But the reading of the paper, by no means correſponding with this interpretation; and as it chiefly ſignified an acceptance of the offered conference; it was, by the legate, pronounced heretical, ſchiſmatic, and inſidious *; and many arguments were uſed by him, and the Spaniſh agents, for the ſuppreſſion of it from the view of the ſtates. But the French partizans of the league, ſuch as Jeanin, and Villeroy, willing to have an early hold of ſome *overture*, that might be a check on the Spaniſh faction, and the Duke of Mayenne ſhowing himſelf neuter in the point; they inſiſted for its being ſubmitted to the judgement of the aſſembly, to which it was addreſſed. Though the Sorbonne was applied to, and its condemnatory ſentence againſt the reception of ſuch a diſpatch was obtained; its introduction, before the ſtates, could not be prevented. In the mean time, the departure of the Duke of Mayenne, to meet with the Duke of Feria, the principal miniſter of the Catholic King, and with Charles Count Manſfelt, who, as temporary governor of the Netherlands, commanded the auxiliary troops of Spain, interrupted the procedure of the ſtates; who, in his abſence, preſumed to determine no material affair. Some violent motions, by the legate, were diverted; his demand, for the reception of the decrees of the council of Trent, only furniſhed freſh argument of debate; and, in ſpite of his oppoſition, and that of the Spaniſh partizans, the conference with the catholic lords of the King's party, excluſive of all others, was at length reſolved on; and the time of it fixed for the 21ſt of April.

After various diſputes about a conference with the loyal catholicks;

March 4.

April 21.

By

* D'Avila, ibid.

1593.

By the opening of the conference, at Surenne, in the neighbourhood of Paris; a ſcene, different from that of the aſſembly of the ſtates, was unfolded; and the incidents, which attended it, proved no leſs important, and intereſting, than the tendency of the reſolutions of that collective body of the league. The commiſſioners nominated on both ſides were, all of them, men of diſtinguiſhed abilities. The Archbiſhop of Bourges, Chavigni, Bellievre, Rambouillet, de Thou, Revol, Schomberg, and a few others, appeared for the loyal catholicks; and on the part of the league, the Archbiſhop of Lyons, the Count de Belin, the Preſidents De Jeanin, and Le Maitre, the Advocate Monthelon, and Villeróy *. Their firſt interview having paſſed, in ſettling ſome preliminaries; the two prelates, as the moſt eminent in dignity, in ſeveral ſubſequent meetings, took occaſion to exert their talents of rhetoric, and acuteneſs, on ſeveral ſubjects that were introduced relative to the general principles in diſpute between the royaliſts, and the partizans of the league. As more temper, and calm addreſs, were preſerved amongſt them, than in a large and mixed aſſembly; both of them ſhone, according to their different genius, and ſphere. More inſinuating, and perſuaſive, in the manner of his elocution, and more preciſe and accurate in his arguments; the firſt of them combated, with advantage, the vivacity, the quicker and warmer imagination, and more ardent elocution of the other. The one had, from the beginning, a main point in view; which was that of a treaty of union, on the ſuppoſition of the King's converſion to the catholic church. More undetermined as to his object, and like one accountable for any improper conceſſions that he might make, to a violent party; the other avoided coming to any embarraſſing concluſion; and, by pleading the higheſt points of the cauſe of the league, ſpun out the conferences. Yet the Biſhop of Bourges introduced, ſo artfully, the

This meaſure is admitted by the ſtates,

and the delegates having met, at Surenne,

the chief arguments in debate between them,

* Thuan. lib. 106. p. 324.

Book III. 1593.

the propoſition of Henry's change of his religion, as a hypothetical baſis of an accommodation, that the Primate of Lyons could not help expreſſing a kind of aſſent to it: "Will not you, ſaid the former, be aſſiſting to us, in making the King a catholick?" "May it pleaſe heaven that he become a good one, replied the latter. We are the children of obedience, and know our duty; if our Holy Father, the Pope be ſatisfied. *" "But, ſaid Bourges, there are mountains and difficult paſſes in the way by land to Rome, and accidents to be feared by ſea. Have we not a road to union, eaſier and ſhorter than this; which you, unſeaſonably, inſiſt on being taken?" The Primate would yield no further; and the conference was adjourned. At the next interview, Bourges came furniſhed with a declaration, taken from Henry's own words, with reſpect to his fixed purpoſe of receiving religious inſtruction; and, together with the intimation of this, he propoſed a general truce, for three months. This aſſurance, on the grand point of the King's propenſity to converſion, which was, till then, diſbelieved by the catholic commiſſioners, put them to a great ſtrait, how to make a reply; and they found themſelves under a neceſſity of acquainting the States with this new diſcovery.

are handled by two eminent prelates.

May 17.

The peculiarity of Henry's fortune and circumſtances appeared, in a great meaſure, to be derived from his religious profeſſion. As a proteſtant, he had been, when firſt Prince of the blood, always hated, and perſecuted by the court, and abhorred by the bulk of the people; and, now, when the crown had deſcended to him, the violent antipathy of a party, long fomented in the kingdom, was raiſed, to the higheſt pitch, againſt him. The catholic lords of this confederacy, no more than the populace, underſtood the rights of conſcience, or made allowance for his education, in a different ſyſtem

Henry's motives and diſpoſition to profeſs himſelf a catholick, being impartially conſidered,

* Ibid. p. 337.

ſtem of faith; or regarded his favourable treatment of his catholic adherents, as any inducement to ſubmit to him, as their lawful ſovereign. On the contrary, their deteſtation of a Hugonot King, along with the growth of civil diſcord, and faction, had excited them to combine againſt his aſſumption of the ſceptre, and endeavour, by the help of foreign powers, either, totally, to wreſt it from him; or to render France a diſmembered monarchy. This view of his own ſituation, and that of the kingdom, could not, from the time of his ſucceſſion to the crown, eſcape Henry; and he had, often, with the tender regret of a Prince, who deſired to be the father of his people, reflected upon it. He had frequently declared, that he would refer himſelf, upon the points of religion, to a free council; and, on his acceſſion to the crown, he had ſworn, to uſe means for his clearer inſtruction. It became, more than ever, neceſſary for him, to diſcharge this engagement *. His catholic friends required it of him; and the faction, called the *third party*, had ariſen in his court, and threatened, on account of his opiniatry, and perſeverance in the proteſtant perſuaſion, to advance the young Cardinal of Bourbon to the throne, or to throw themſelves into a new confederacy againſt him. The wiſer, and more moderate, of his proteſtant followers were ſenſible of the hard dilemma, to which he was reduced; and perceived the neceſſity of his making ſome effort, to extricate himſelf, and the kingdom, from it. The more rigid, and impetuous among them, indeed, would pardon no impreſſions that might be made on his mind, from regard to the peace of a long embroiled kingdom; and thought it became him to act, wholly, upon religious motives, and convictions †. We ſee, from D'Aubigné, that they repreſented the *third party*, as a political bugbear, created by affected, and not real terror; in order to induce Henry to renounce his profeſſion, at the expence of his conſcience; and to overawe them-

this change, which was blamed in him by ſome,

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 5.

† D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 24.

Book III. 1593.

themſelves into an unworthy acquieſcence in it *. According to the narrative given in Sully's Memoirs, this intimidating argument about the third party, and the deſertion of the Princes of the blood from him, was urged by Henry, with all its force, upon the proteſtant chiefs aſſembled before him; and the confuſion, into which they were thrown by it, is ſaid to have made them conſent to a negotiation with the catholicks. But it is more certain, from the authority of the beſt catholic, and proteſtant hiſtorians, that ſeveral of the moſt eminent chieftains of the latter party, convinced themſelves of the neceſſity of the meaſure, were diſpoſed to make no oppoſition to the King's converſion to the catholic church. Not only the Duke of Bouillon, to whom the Preſident de Thou wrote on the ſubject, but Du Pleſſis Mornay, and many others, were contented to purchaſe the public peace, at this rate; and were ſatisfied that Henry, though turned catholick, was that Sovereign of France, from whom they could expect a deſireable compromiſe, with reſpect to religion, and the ſecurities neceſſary for their future ſafety, and peace †. To the honour, likewiſe, of the moderate catholicks, of the King's council, a reſolution was taken, and ſubſcribed by them; that, during the conferences at Surenne, nothing ſhould be attempted, or adviſed, to the prejudice of the concord, and public agreement, ſubſiſting with the proteſtants. It was upon theſe conſiderations and motions for the public quiet, that Henry, already affected at heart, with the argument of his becoming the ſoftener, or reconciler of that inveterate enmity, betwixt the two religions, proceeded to call together ſome catholic prelates and eccleſiaſtics, to attend his religious inſtruction; and that he gave ſuch a document of his purpoſe, to the deputies at Surenne, as left little or no ground, for his opponents there, to doubt of his intended change.

was regarded as neceſſary and inevitable, by ſeveral of the proteſtant chiefs;

The

* Thuan. lib. 106. p. 338. D'Aubigné, ibid. P. Daniel, p. 657. † Thuan. ibid.

1593.

The ſiege of Dreux, by Henry, added to the conferences of Surenne *, made a great impreſſion on the aſſembly of the ſtates of the league. From the one, they dreaded the progreſs of the King's arms in the field; and from the other, the undermining of their grand project, for the election of a catholic King, by their ſuffrages. After exclaiming againſt ſuch intercourſe, with the favourers of a heretical Prince; the legate endeavoured, by his proteſtations againſt it, and menaces of leaving Paris, to ſuppreſs † the conferences altogether; and, eſpecially, to hinder the report of the deputies, with reſpect to the King's intention of being inſtructed, to be read in the aſſembly. This laſt circumſtance ſhowed the fear they were under, of the people abating their prejudices againſt Henry, on the proſpect of his converſion. The Spaniſh envoys, and the Duke of Mayenne himſelf, perceiving the tendency of the conferences, to cool the ardor of their partizans, for the choice of a catholic King; agreed that the formal propoſition, with reſpect to it, ſhould be made, in a meeting of ſome delegates, choſen out of the three orders of the ſtates. It was, accordingly, moved, in a ſpeech by the Duke of Feria; who not only propoſed the election, but inſiſted on the title, of the Infanta, Clara Eugenia Iſabella, the daughter of his Catholic Majeſty, and the grand-child of Henry II. of France. No motion, that had been ſo long expected in a public aſſembly, was ever heard with leſs approbation. It ſeemed, as if the Spaniſh ambaſſador had been incited to make it, in ſuch terms of diſregard to the *Salic law*, ſo long maintained in the kingdom, by thoſe who wiſhed he might create offence, and leſſen the credit of every other propoſal, he had to offer, to the ſtates. As it was underſtood that the Archduke Ernheſt, of Auſtria, was deſigned by Philip, to be eſpouſed to the Infanta; the contempt ſhown to all the Princes of the blood of France, appeared no leſs manifeſt, by the propoſition. It ſtruck, in ſuch a manner,

The chiefs of the league, fearing the conſequences of Henry's converſion,

May 19. who introduce the grand motion of the election of a King, by the ſtates;

* Satyre Menipp. tom. 2. p. 23. † D'Avila, ibid. Thuan. ibid. p. 342.

Book III.

1593.
May 26.
which being insisted on by the envoys in favour of the Infanta, created disgust;

ner, de Rozé *, the Bishop of Senlis, tho' one of the most outrageous leaguers; that, forgetting all decorum, he exclaimed against it, in virulent, and offensive language. It became, only, the more ridiculous to some, and excited indignation in others; by being, at a formal audience, urged before the states, by Mendoza; who, from his scholastic erudition, and skill in the codes of the civil and canon law, pretended to prove, that the Princes of Bourbon, being set aside, as hereticks, or abettors of them; the Infanta had an incontestible claim to the crown. It appeared, by the manner in which he was heard, that he laboured the disgustful argument in vain; and that, in a political view, the scheme was entirely absurd; when all the forces sent into France, at this time, by Philip, hardly amounted to seven thousand men. The envoys being, at last, told that the transferring of the crown to a Princess, and one of the Austrian family, was neither consonant to the sentiments of the French, nor practicable in itself; they proposed her marriage with one of the princes of the kingdom; including, amongst them, the Lords of the family of Lorain. Adapted to flatter the hopes of several competitors, and recommended by the most liberal promises of the armies and treasures of Spain, to render it effectual; this offer, at first, was received with apparent approbation; and seemed to engage the general suffrages of the assembly. But, when it began to be reduced to more speciality; various difficulties presented themselves. Every article, about the nature of the right, by which the spouse of the Infanta was to possess the crown, and about the expediency of postponing the election, till after the marriage, created disputes. Each of the competitors, whose hopes of success declined, turned those arguments against his rivals; and the whole debate, being rendered a labyrinth, issued only, in confusion, and disagreement.

that could not be allayed entirely by any more plausible proposition.

The

* Satyre Menippée, ibid. p. 206.

The agitation and perplexity raiſed in the ſtates, was increaſed by the controverſial pieces that were printed; and by the murmurs and fermentation of many of the Pariſians, wearied of the civil broils, and who ſaw no period likely to be put to them; from the much boaſted remedy of the convention of the ſtates. Inſtead of pacific admonitions, the legate publiſhed his violent mandates againſt the conferences *; in which the generality of people began to place their only hopes of concord. Betwixt the outrageous tone of the legate, and the ſenſible diſcontent of the citizens; the leading chieftains in the ſtates durſt not, for ſome time, reſolve upon the anſwer to be given to the catholic commiſſioners of the King's party; with reſpect to a propoſed general truce. While jealous of one another, oppoſing, and being oppoſed in the great field of their faction and controverſy, about the diſpoſal of the crown; the parliament of the league in Paris reverting, as if by ſudden inſpiration, to the regular principles of that conſtitutional branch of the monarchy †, iſſued its ſignal and famous arret, *againſt the breach of the Salic law, and the conferring of the crown of France upon any Princeſs whatever, or Prince, of a foreign nation.* This declaration, proceeding from a body of men, who uſed to be the interpreters of the law, ſeemed to break, like lightning, thro' the dark cloud of faction ‡. Though, as Sully remarks, none were ignorant of the doctrine it contained; it branded, in a public manner, the ignominious deliberations of the ſtate; ſo contradictory to the fundamental, and known law of the monarchy; and made many of the factious themſelves bluſh, at being acceſſary to the diſhonouring of the blood of France, and the open violation of the rights of the royalty.

In the midſt of much debate about the election of a King;

the parliament of Paris iſſues a famous arret for maintaining the Salic law. June 28.

Whether, from the ſentiments of a Frenchman, or from diſdain of the weak aſſiſtance, and high pretenſions of Spain, or from diſ-

* D'Avila, ibid. † Satyre Menip. tom. 3. p. 352. ‡ Mem. liv. 5.

BOOK III.

1593. May 26. which being insisted on by the envoys in favour of the Infanta, created disgust;

ner, de Rozé *, the Bishop of Senlis, tho' one of the most outrageous leaguers; that, forgetting all decorum, he exclaimed against it, in virulent, and offensive language. It became, only, the more ridiculous to some, and excited indignation in others; by being, at a formal audience, urged before the states, by Mendoza; who, from his scholastic erudition, and skill in the codes of the civil and canon law, pretended to prove, that the Princes of Bourbon, being set aside, as hereticks, or abettors of them; the Infanta had an incontestible claim to the crown. It appeared, by the manner in which he was heard, that he laboured the disgustful argument in vain; and that, in a political view, the scheme was entirely absurd; when all the forces sent into France, at this time, by Philip, hardly amounted to seven thousand men. The envoys being, at last, told that the transferring of the crown to a Princess, and one of the Austrian family, was neither consonant to the sentiments of the French, nor practicable in itself; they proposed her marriage with one of the princes of the kingdom; including, amongst them, the Lords of the family of Lorain. Adapted to flatter the hopes of several competitors, and recommended by the most liberal promises of the armies and treasures of Spain, to render it effectual; this offer, at first, was received with apparent approbation; and seemed to engage the general suffrages of the assembly. But, when it began to be reduced to more speciality; various difficulties presented themselves. Every article, about the nature of the right, by which the spouse of the Infanta was to possess the crown, and about the expediency of postponing the election, till after the marriage, created disputes. Each of the competitors, whose hopes of success declined, turned those arguments against his rivals; and the whole debate, being rendered a labyrinth, issued only, in confusion, and disagreement.

that could not be allayed entirely by any more plausible proposition.

The

* Satyre Menippée, ibid. p. 206.

1593.

The agitation and perplexity raiſed in the ſtates, was increaſed by the controverſial pieces that were printed; and by the murmurs and fermentation of many of the Pariſians, wearied of the civil broils, and who ſaw no period likely to be put to them; from the much boaſted remedy of the convention of the ſtates. Inſtead of pacific admonitions, the legate publiſhed his violent mandates againſt the conferences *; in which the generality of people began to place their only hopes of concord. Betwixt the outrageous tone of the legate, and the ſenſible diſcontent of the citizens; the leading chieftains in the ſtates durſt not, for ſome time, reſolve upon the anſwer to be given to the catholic commiſſioners of the King's party; with reſpect to a propoſed general truce. While jealous of one another, oppoſing, and being oppoſed in the great field of their faction and controverſy, about the diſpoſal of the crown; the parliament of the league in Paris reverting, as if by ſudden inſpiration, to the regular principles of that conſtitutional branch of the monarchy †, iſſued its ſignal and famous arret, *againſt the breach of the Salic law, and the conferring of the crown of France upon any Princeſs whatever, or Prince, of a foreign nation.* This declaration, proceeding from a body of men, who uſed to be the interpreters of the law, ſeemed to break, like lightning, thro' the dark cloud of faction ‡. Though, as Sully remarks, none were ignorant of the doctrine it contained; it branded, in a public manner, the ignominious deliberations of the ſtate; ſo contradictory to the fundamental, and known law of the monarchy; and made many of the factious themſelves bluſh, at being acceſſary to the diſhonouring of the blood of France, and the open violation of the rights of the royalty.

In the midſt of much debate about the election of a King;

the parliament of Paris iſſues a famous arret for maintaining the Salic law. June 28.

Whether, from the ſentiments of a Frenchman, or from diſdain of the weak aſſiſtance, and high pretenſions of Spain, or from diſ-

* D'Avila, ibid. † Satyre Menip. tom. 3. p. 352. ‡ Mem. liv. 5.

BOOK III. 1593.

appointed views of ambition, relative to himſelf or his ſon, the Duke of Mayenne allowed the Spaniſh miniſters to hurt the cauſe and intereſt, by thoſe extravagant and offenſive propoſitions; it is not eaſy to determine. Certain it appears, that they imputed the oppoſition they met with, and their diſappointments, to him; and were the more irritated, that they conſidered him as bound, by particular obligations, to promote the ſervice of their maſter. Some hiſtorians relate the particulars of the firſt conference he had with the Duke of Feria, in preſence of the other Spaniſh envoys; in which much animoſity and diſcontent was teſtified on both ſides *. Others intimate, that he, ſecretly, inſtigated the parliament to interpoſe their bold decree; which ſtruck at the root of their ſcheme about the Infanta. Their procedure now ſhowed the reſentment they entertained againſt him. Reſolute to carry their point, and in that way which, though he could hardly oppoſe, they believed, would ſpite him not a little; they propoſed the conjunct election, and marriage of the Duke of Guiſe and the *Infanta*. The conditions annexed to this offer, were ſo reaſonable, as to be hardly liable to the leaſt objection. Mayenne, believing they had not expreſs authority from Philip, upon the point, ſignified his ſatisfaction, and his acknowledgement of the high honour done to his family †. They exhibited, at leaſt, a colourable warrant; and the Duke found himſelf, unexpectedly, thrown into the greateſt embarraſſment. But, popular as the name of his nephew was, and though deſerted by the train of his friends, who formed a little court about the Duke of Guiſe; Mayenne ſhowed that he would not be compelled to yield to their intrigues ‡. Having excuſed himſelf, upon various pretences, from taking a final reſolution, and cauſing others to ſtart difficulties, and protract the argument, by their comments and

The Spaniſh envoys highly irritated againſt the Duke of Mayenne;

endeavour to overthrow his intereſt in the aſſembly, by propoſing the marriage of the Duke of Guiſe and the Infanta;

* D'Avila, ibid. † Thuan. lib. 107. p. 360. ‡ Satyre Menip. tom. 3. p. 365.

1593.

and ſiniſter reflections on the ſcheme; he is even ſaid to have uſed endeavours for reviving the once projected coalition with the third party, and introducing again the Cardinal of Bourbon upon the ſcene. But the moſt effectual means he found to extricate himſelf from the importunity of his relations, and the ſolicitation of ſeveral of the French nobles, as well as of the Spaniards, was the allowing, or procuring the motion for a truce to be carried in the aſſembly of the States. Upon the * arguments uſed by La Châtre, one of the Marſhals he had created, and whoſe influence was conſiderable amongſt the nobility; the deputies of two of the three orders gave their ſuffrages for a general truce for three months; and the repreſentatives of the church only continued obſtinate in voting for war.

which embarraſſment he eludes.

While the conferences were ſtill continued, and other commiſſioners were nominated on both ſides to adjuſt the articles of the ceſſation of hoſtilities; Henry meditated the improvement of this favourable ſituation of things, by taking ſeveral preliminary ſteps towards his converſion to the catholic religion. The report of his purpoſed ſubmiſſion to inſtruction, had ſo far diſſipated the prejudices of ſome of the clergy of the league, againſt him, that two or three of the Pariſian curates † forſook their charges; in order to aſſiſt in this meritorious and intereſting buſineſs. It was viſible, from various circumſtances, what great efficacy his change in religion would have, in deſtroying the ſinews of the league; which were already much cramped and weakened through the kingdom. Henry's delay of this meaſure, though moſt probably foreſeen by him, as neceſſary, from the beginning, was attended with this happy political conſequence; that, being placed at the head of the proteſtants, the princes of the blood, and the loyal catholicks, he was enabled

The report of Henry's intended converſion operates in his favour.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 368.

† Ibid. p. 371. D'Avila, ibid.

BOOK III. 1593.

enabled to combat, and, in a great meaſure, to vanquiſh the power of this confederacy; which, under the pretext of religion, had, in the former reign, almoſt overturned the throne; and was, from its genius and tendency, utterly incompatible with the ſafety of the ſtate. It appears *, that two conſiderations had much increaſed Henry's ſuſpenſe, with reſpect to the renunciation of his religious ſyſtem. Not only the fear of loſing the ſupport of the proteſtants, but the regret and averſion he felt, at the thoughts of being conſidered as an apoſtate from the party of his only friends and aſſociates in extremity, affected the ſenſibility of his heart. He, alſo, could not, from the ſincerity of his nature, and his religious ſentiments, proceed to this change, only upon political motives. The principles and impreſſions of religion he had, though uninflamed by bigotted zeal, operated againſt it. He required inſtruction, not for form's ſake, but on account of ſome real ſcruples and difficulties, of a religious kind, entertained by him. That thoſe might be overcome, in a ſhort time, is not, as Sully obſerves, in the leaſt degree incredible: When the moſt learned, artful, and inſinuating diſputants of the catholic † clergy, were encouraged to confer with the King, and diſplay, before him, on the particular ſubjects of controverſy, all their erudition and oratory; when it is certain, that ſome of the proteſtant divines, named by D'Aubigné, temporiſed ſo far, as to yield the argument to their antagoniſts, or grant them a triumph, by affected perplexity in the diſpute; it was no wonder that Henry, unconverſant in polemical theology, was perſuaded to think differently from what he had done, upon ſeveral ſpeculative points; and, at length, to reconcile himſelf to the tenets and diſcipline of that church, which, for a long time, had juſtly excited his averſion. While many of the proteſtants, thus conformed to the exi-

Reaſons for his delay of it;

and the means to which he at laſt owed his conviction.

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 5. P. Daniel, tom. 9. p. 670.

† D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 24. Sully, ibid.

1593.

exigencies of the King and ſtate, and conſpired in the deſign of the moderate and loyal catholicks, to promote Henry's more firm and peaceable eſtabliſhment on the throne; the partizans of faction endeavoured to ſtart difficulties, and the inſtruments and votaries of the papal tyranny, to throw all poſſible obſtacles in the way of its ſucceſs. The cardinal of Bourbon *, who ſaw all his vain hopes on the point of expiring, inſiſted, at a meeting of the prelates, that Henry could not be abſolved, or reſtored to the communion and privileges of the church; until the Pope's conſent, and authority for it, were obtained. The legate, revengeful to the laſt, emitted a declaration, pronouncing any ſuch preſumptuous abſolution to be, as an inſult on the canons, and the holy ſee, null and invalid in itſelf; and threatening all eccleſiaſtics, who ſhould pretend to adminiſter it, with deprivation, and the higheſt cenſures of the church. An ordinance was likewiſe publiſhed by the Duke of Mayenne, to prohibit the Pariſians from going out of the city; on the day fixed for Henry's appearance at St Denis, to make his public abjuration.

July 13.

After a long conteſt, the conferences with the Archbiſhop of Lyons, and his colleagues, about the exerciſe of an act of abſolution, to the King, and his reception into the boſom of the church; the Biſhop of Bourges, and the prelates that joined with him, reſolved, in ſpite of all oppoſition, to proceed to the performance of this religious ceremony. Upon the day of this ſolemnity, it was viſible, from † the vaſt multitude of people who, notwithſtanding the prohibition and the guarding of the gates, ruſhed from Paris, that nothing could be more acceptable to the generality of them; and that all the menaces of the legate, and the declamations of the enraged preachers, could not make them comprehend the reaſon, why a King, when willing to renounce his errors, and be converted to the holy church, ſhould

Crowds break forth from Paris to behold the ceremony of Henry's coronation;

* Thuan, ibid. p. 367. et 71. D'Avila, ibid.

† Ibid.

Book III. 1593.

ſhould not be received within its pale. The congratulations and embraces of many of their relations, and friends, from whom they had been long ſeparated, further excited their joy; and teſtified the reliſh they had of the ſuſpenſion of that barbarous rage of civil war, which had alienated them from one another, and extended bloodſhed, and deſolation, through the cities, and provinces of France. But, the ſpectacle of the King's abjuration of hereſy, and his ſolemn profeſſion of the true catholic faith, on his knees, and all the other rituals of his abſolution, performed by the Archbiſhop of Bourges, were beheld with peculiar ſatisfaction. Their exclamations of the *Vive le Roy*, accompanied the benedictions from thouſands of voices, which were given him, in the church of the abbey of St Denis; and upon his departure from it, the crowds that flocked after him, to his lodgings, and which, by his orders, were not reſtrained, ſhewed various teſtimonies of their admiration of his manly and noble mien; then ſoftened by an engaging air of condeſcenſion, and a pleaſant ſenſation of the general joy *. It is ſaid, that ſome factious, or enthuſiaſtic propoſitions were made, by the zealots of the clerical order, reſpecting the formulary of the King's confeſſion of his faith; which, if they had not been departed from, would have cauſed an interruption of this agreeable ſcene. A proteſtant writer, of authority, aſſerts, that the Cardinal of Bourbon propoſed, that Henry ſhould ſwear, to make war with the Hugonots. But theſe ignominious and turbulent devices being ſuppreſſed, the only condition, annexed to his abſolution, was that of his immediate acknowledgment of the Pope, by an embaſſy to Rome, and his requeſt of the confirmation of it, by his Holineſs.

which is performed at St Denis. July 25.

If any appearance, of the furious, and malignant paſſions of human nature, may be deemed ludicrous; that which was, at this juncture,

* Mem. de Sully, ibid. P. Daniel, ibid. p. 671.

1593. The virulence expreſſed by the incendiary preachers, at Henry's abſolution.

juncture, made by the more outrageous preachers of the league in Paris, may be reckoned ſo. Thoſe incendiaries, exaſperated at the ſcene which paſſed at St Denis, almoſt in their view, and filled with indignation, at the ſenſible change of the diſpoſitions of the Pariſians, with reſpect to the King, ſhowed how ill they bore the decline of that abſolute ſway, which they had long exerciſed over the minds of the populace *. Their pulpit orations correſponded with this frantic temper; and the arguments they uſed, and the tones and attitudes they aſſumed, were expreſſive both of rage, and mortification; when they were obliged to employ all their ghoſtly powers of addreſs, and ſtretch forth their arms towards a back-ſliding people. With what ſoleciſms, quaint apoſtrophes, and rhetorical flouriſhes, their ſermons would abound; may be imagined from the eſſay of John Boucher, Curate of St Benedict †, one of the moſt famous of them, in his diſcourſe, at the time of the opening of the ſtates, in the church of Notre Dame. He took, for his text, the Pſalmiſt's ſupplication; *Deliver me out of the mire*; in the vulgar Latin verſion, *Eripe me de luto fœcis*. In expreſſing thoſe words in French, he found out a rare uſe might be made of the epithet *boué*, or *bourbe*, which ſignifies *mire* or *puddle*. He declared that the Pſalmiſt ought to be underſtood, in this prayer, as holding forth a prophetical admonition, ſuited to the ſtruggle the French nation had with the *bourbes*, or *Bourbons*; and, that his words might well be interpreted, *Seigneur, debourbez, ou debourbonez nous; Otez nous cette race de Bourbon.* He preached a ſuite of nine ſermons, to prove that the converſion of Henry of Bourbon was fictitious; and his abſolution altogether null and void; and the work of an infernal cabal. They were printed, with a dedication to the Cardinal legate. But the people began to loath their former ſpiritual food; and, inſtead of being edified with invectives againſt the King, heard them

* Thuan. ibid. p. 374. † Satyre Menip. tom. 2. p. 23. Ibid. p. 50. et 259.

Book III. 1593.

with marks of averſion, and diſguſt. Such of them, as were obſtinately rooted in their religious, or political enmity againſt him, ſhowed themſelves, like the preachers, more highly enraged than before his converſion; which, notwithſtanding all the objections they heard made to it, they could not help conſidering as a great overthrow to their ſanguine hopes and wiſhes.

Unhappily, for the quiet of the kingdom, which now began to dawn; the behaviour of the political chiefs of the league, formed a counterpart to that of the incendiary preachers. Dreading a revolution of affairs, unfavourable to their intereſted and ambitious views, and not enduring the thought of any treaty, or compromiſe with the King, but upon the footing of thoſe, who were his equals in the field, or could, ſtill, maintain a long war againſt him; they entered into a ſtricter concert, to ſtand by one another, and oppoſe him, than they had yet formed; and agreed to conclude the aſſembly of the ſtates, with more evidences of concord and unanimity than what had been ſeen, during the whole courſe of their convention *. For this purpoſe, not only was the ſolemn oath for their union, and adherence to the league, renewed; but, in a more ſecret meeting, the principal confederates ſwore, upon the croſs, not to acknowledge the King of Navarre's title, nor concur with his eſtabliſhment on the throne, even although he profeſſed himſelf a catholick, and ſhould perſevere in that religion; unleſs the Pope's determination ſhould require it of them. Their ſhameful and groſs proſtitution of the name of religion, and their ſcorn of it, when unſubſervient to their political purpoſes, were clearly demonſtrated, as Sully remarks, from this procedure. It equally diſcovered their apprehenſions of the downfal of their faction, and their great anxiety to ſupport it, by every device, from ſudden perdition. In thoſe

The factious of the league make their laſt effort to ſupport their falling party.

counſels,

* Thuan. ibid. p. 374. Mem. de Sully, liv. 5. P. Daniel, p. 673.

counſels, the Duke of Mayenne was no leſs forward than the legate and the agents of Spain; conſcious as he was of having thwarted their ſchemes and propoſals, in the aſſembly of the ſtates, and willing, now, in the concluſion of it, to mitigate their reſentment; which, as the affairs of the league ſtood, might prove highly prejudicial to his own particular intereſt. Hence, for the further contentment of the Cardinal of Placentia, he contrived to get a decree paſſed, for the publication of the council of Trent, without reſtriction; though it could hardly be ſaid to be the act of the ſtates, which he had adjourned to the month of October; before the motion for it was made. The apology of the ſtates, given in writing to the Spaniſh ambaſſadors, for their not having proceeded to the election of a Catholic King, after all the mighty parade, and the political intrigues about it, gave an air of ridicule to the iſſue of their deliberations; no leſs ſuited to the ſtrokes of ſatire, than the appearance made, and the ſpeeches delivered, at the commencement of their aſſembly.

From the concluſion of the ſtates, in this abortive manner, and from the truce, which was ratified by them; the King's cauſe and intereſt were, manifeſtly, advanced. By the one event, the league was diſcovered in its utmoſt effort for concord, to be a disjointed body, incoherent in itſelf, and ſo far from the capacity of affording relief or tranquility to the kingdom, to be productive of endleſs jars and confuſion. By the other, the credit of which was attributed to the King; the taſte of peace, ſo long loſt in the nation, was revived; that taſte, the offspring and bond of humanity and civilization, which binds men more to order, than all the political ties of government. Upon the cities, eſpecially *, ſome of which had, before this, applied to Henry, for the liberty of commerce; the favourable

The ſtates of the league being abruptly concluded;

 effect

* D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 23.

BOOK III. 1593.

effect was likely to be more immediate, and conſiderable. The Pariſians, who had been moſt begirt with hoſtilities, and even in the time of the ſtates, had ſuffered by the near alarms of them, became ſenſible of the agreeable change of their circumſtances. Cool reflexions, on the paſt ſcenes of their diſtreſs, made them think on the return of it with horror; and, while, inſtead of hearing, or beholding nothing but the emblems, or incitements to war, the ſafe and free intercourſe with the adjacent towns and country, and undiſturbed correſpondence with their friends, powerfully engaged, and humanized their minds; they were, gradually, rendered the votaries of peace*. It is, alſo, juſtly obſerved, that, when the harangues of the preachers, from tautology and outrageous language, became irkſome to the hearers, the various pieces, both ſerious and entertaining, publiſhed on the ſide of the loyaliſts, were peruſed with more reliſh, and, in the interval of peace, made a ſtronger impreſſion on the minds of the people. The gayety, natural to the French, being reſumed; they began to be more entertained with the humorous, than the ſerious eſſays, on the extravagancies, religious and political, into which they had been hurried; by the violence of the times, and the agitation of party-ſpirit †. It was then, that the *Satyre Menippée, ou la Vertu du Catholicon d'Eſpagne*, operated, like a charm, in diſſipating the gloomy and fantaſtic prejudices, with which they had been overpowered; and ſhowed the characters, and actions of men, and the moſt intereſting events, in ſuch a light, as diverted, and inſtructed the more intelligent claſs of people. A remarkable and happy effect! which proved that licentiouſneſs of publications, which is often, and juſtly, complained of, under free governments, carries its antidote along with it; and is, generally, much more diſguſtful, and alarming, than really dangerous, in its conſequences ‡. The curious, among the French, ſtill read this original

and the Pariſians having taſted the ſweets of peace;

the natural gay humour of the French diſcovers itſelf, by their reliſh of the Satyre Menippée.

* Ibid. † Ibid. liv. 4. chap. 1. ‡ L'Eſprit de la ligue, tom. 3. p. 247.

original piece of burleſque ſatire with pleaſure, and entertainment; though the deſign and execution of it be ſimple, and deſtitute of all decoration and refinement. It was the maſter-piece * of the times, in that ſpecies of writing; if we judge of its merit, from its reception, and ſurpriſing influence; which is ſaid to have contributed as much to the advancement of the King's cauſe, as many victories won by him, in the field. 1593.

The refinement wanted in the *Satyre Menippée*, was, not long after this period, fully compenſated by a production of a far more poliſhed, and claſſical genius; the *Argenis* of *Barclay*, ſo well known and admired in the literary world. There is indeed no reſemblance betwixt thoſe two performances, but the choice of the ſame ſubject by the authors. The latter, though written in the reign of Lewis XIII. aſſimulates its allegorical perſonages, and ſcene, to the ſtate of the kingdom, by the inſurrections of the league, under Henry III. The epic muſe, in the higheſt ſtrain of fiction and allegory, embelliſhes this political romance, with all the elegance and harmony of the Latin language without numbers. The alluſions to particular facts are rare, and can only be traced out, by the exacteſt knowledge of the hiſtory. This circumſtance, added to the natural obſcurity of an allegorical work, diminiſhes the entertainment it affords; while every one of taſte is charmed with the invention, the ingenuity, and the literary merit and compoſition diſplayed in it. In mentioning the ingenious productions in the times of the civil wars, which tended to abate the rage of them; it ſeemed not improper to bring ſo celebrated a piece as the *Argenis* in view; the work of one that was the ſon of a native of this iſland; a man of genius and erudition, who removed from the northern parts of it, into the dutchy of Lorain; where the author of the *Argenis* was born to him. The ſubject of the 1621.

Along with that Satire, the Argenis of Barclay deſerves to be mentioned, and characteriſed,

* Thuan. lib. 105. p. 315.

Book III.

1593.

the civil broils, which, in a different ſhape from that of the league, aroſe in the minority of Lewis XIII. fired the imagination of this eleve of the muſes. His more refined and cultivated genius, furniſhed from it, to the miniſters of princes, to the more inſtructed claſs of the nobles, to the ſeminaries of literature and wit, and to the ingenious of all nations, a ſpecific of the fineſt kind, againſt diſloyalty and civil diſcord. The Argenis was calculated for their peruſal, and entertainment, and was reliſhed, amongſt them; as the *Satyre Menippée* had been, by the more ordinary, and popular claſs of readers in France. If we make allowance for ſome diſparity in the compariſon, the latter may be reckoned the *Hudibras* of that nation. It is only neceſſary to add, that the original author of the *Satyre Menippée* *, for ſome time undiſcovered, and not fully aſcertained amongſt the curious, was found to be a chaplain of the young Cardinal of Bourbon's, a native of Normandy, of the name of *Roy*. Having ſketched out, with the ſtrokes of his pencil, the ground-work of the Satire; it was taken up, and proſecuted by ſeveral tracts and eſſays; compoſed by Rapin, Pithou, Paſſerat, Chretien; and, as was believed, by Henry IV. himſelf.

While the minds and affections of the people in France, thus underwent a ſenſible change, with reſpect to the league; one great nail of its fabric was ſtill rivetted, by the reſiſtence and oppoſition of the Sovereign Pontiff at Rome, to admit of Henry's reconcilement to the catholic church. The King's embaſſy, ſent to Rome, in conſequence of his converſion, and his engagement to the prelates who had abſolved him, was treated by Clement VIII. with apparent diſdain †. Unconvinced of the ſincerity of his profeſſed change;

* Thuan. ibid. Henault. Preuves de Satyre, tom. 2. p. 16. L'Eſprit de la ligue, tom. 1. p. 19.

† D'Avila, liv. 14.

1593. Henry's reconciliation with the church is obſtructed by the Pope.

change; reſenting the contemptuous uſage of the bulls of his predeceſſors, by the parliament of Tours, and incenſed at the preſumption of the French clergy, in granting, without his authority, an abſolution to Henry; he forbid the Duke of Nevers, who was the head of the embaſſy, to appear, at Rome, in any other character, but that of a private nobleman, perſonally acceptable to the holy ſee. It would be tedious to narrate the ſupercilious, and haughty behaviour, the various public affronts, and the affected wrath, which were teſtified by Clement, on the appearance of this nobleman, attended by the biſhop of Mans, and the dean of the cathedral church of Paris *. The reiterated indignities he experienced, in attempting only to plead for a hearing of the King's cauſe, were carried to ſuch a pitch, as demonſtrated, how awful in frowns, and inexorable, even to penitent princes, it behoved the wearer of the triple crown to ſhow himſelf; though he meant not, in reality, to exert the dreadful thunder of his power †. Upon an order being iſſued, for the clerical envoys to anſwer, for their conduct, before the Inquiſitor-general of Rome; the Duke of Nevers, an Italian as he was, and moſt devoted to the papal hierarchy, forgot, in juſt provocation, his ſpiritual allegiance; and, taking his perſecuted colleagues under his protection, marched through Rome, in broad day-light, like one ready to repel all aggreſſors, and quitted the city. In the midſt of all this manifeſt indignation, on the part of Clement; hints were given to ſome inferior, and clandeſtine agents for the King, that he ought not to deſpair; but hope that time, and proper means, might operate, to the attainment of his deſire. But the only certain evidence afforded to Henry, with reſpect to the Pope's ſecret intention to act with moderation, was the cool and indifferent anſwer made by his Holineſs, to the envoys of the Duke of Mayenne, and the league.

* Thuan. lib. 108. p. 401.

† Ibid. p. 404.

BOOK III.

1593.

league *. Tho' amicably received, they were given to underſtand, that the ſuccours of the Holy See were deſtined for another purpoſe, than that of maintaining the league in France; and they found it neceſſary to advertiſe their party, that they ought not be reckoned upon by them.

In the mean time; to make Henry ſenſible of the danger which hung over his head, from the implacable rage of his enemies, a diſcovery was made of an aſſaſſination deſigned to be perpetrated on his perſon †. Peter Barriere, one of thoſe hapleſs wretches, who, being diſordered in their heads, are, ſometimes, rendered ſubſervient to the criminal purpoſes of the ſober, and timid villains of their ſpecies, had been inſtigated to undertake the horrid parricide. It is ſaid, with probability, that, having accuſed himſelf of ſome private and enormous crime, of which, it is likely, he had never been guilty, he was told, by ſome ghoſtly confeſſors, that remiſſion, and grace before God, could not be obtained by him, without his performing an egregious act of holy zeal, in behalf of the church. He either was led by his frenzy, or directed by the guides of his conſcience, to fix on the murder of the King; as the moſt ſignal, and meritorious of all other ſervices. Thus was the moral doctrine of the merit of works, in which the catholic church boaſts herſelf, woefully proved liable to the groſſeſt perverſion, by her enthuſiaſtic votaries. Having confeſſed his purpoſe to a Dominican at Lyons, ſo exact a portrait was taken of him, and tranſmitted to the court, that he was detected by it at Melun; where Henry's preſence might have ſoon afforded the opportunity he deſired. His remorſe and penitence, without the rack, procured from his judges, ſome abate-

Peter Barriere is inſtigated to attempt the aſſaſſination of the King.

ment

* Ibid. p. 408. Thuan. lib. 107. p. 381.

† Satyre Menip. tom. 1. p. 243. Ibid. tom. 2. p. 153.

ment of the tortures to which he was condemned *. But Henry, from clemency, and being aſhamed, as he ſaid, of having ſuch enemies, wiſhed to have given him a full pardon; and declared, that, if the criminal had been brought into his ſight, he would have exerciſed his prerogative, in that caſe, of annulling the ſentence of the law.

1593.

* Thuan. ibid.

CHAP. IV.

Henry's Inauguration at Chartres.—His Admiſſion into Paris concerted; and executed without Oppoſition.—Submiſſion, and Treaties of various Cities and Chieftains, with Henry.—The War ſpun out, by Philip II.; and the Duke of Mayenne.—John Chaſtel's Attempt on the Life of Henry.—War proclaimed againſt Spain.—Continuation of the Hiſtory of the Netherlands.—Procedure of the Proteſtant Party.

BOOK III. 1593.

THE efficacy of the King's converſion, and of the truce, was not manifeſted, by any important event; during the elapſe of four or five months. The diſpoſition of ſeveral great cities, in the intereſt of the league, to ſubmit to the King, was, chiefly, perceptible from the ſuſpenſion of that animoſity, formerly teſtified, by the deluded people, againſt the acknowledgment of him; and by the facility, with which ſeveral of the governors of towns, heard of propoſals, to that purpoſe, made to them, by Henry's friends and agents. But, undetermined in their reſolutions, and every one being unwilling to ſet the firſt example of a ſurrender, they expected, ſtill, what iſſue the truce might have; as the Duke of Mayenne kept them in hopes, either, of ſoon concluding a general and advantageous treaty with Henry; or of furniſhing them with the means of maintaining the war, againſt him, with more vigour, and ſucceſs. With many of them, war was an eligible trade; on which their fortunes chiefly depended; and, though they had proved it to be a moſt precarious ſource of wealth, they could not brook the ſurrender, or diminution of thoſe governments, poſts, and preferments, they had acquired by it. At length, however, when, in the end of the year, to which the truce had been prolonged, they ſaw the Duke of Mayenne,

After ſome ſuſpenſe of their reſolutions,

enne, uncertain of the ſucceſs of his application to Spain, and but little aſſured of the favour of the Pope; ſome of them became impatient, and more reſolute in fixing upon the meaſures they ought to follow. Henry's judicious and ſeaſonable declaration of his reaſons for refuſing the further continuation of the truce*, ſtruck them the more; as it contained, not only a general amneſty, for the paſt, to all who returned to their allegiance, within a month, but an aſſurance, that their poſts, dignities, and places, as well as their eſtates, ſhould be preſerved to them. Lewis de L' Hoſpital, Lord of Vitri, and governor of Meaux, for the league, was the firſt that declared himſelf a convert, on principles of loyalty, and patriotiſm, to the King; as he had, alſo, formerly, led the way to the catholic nobles, to deſert him, on account of his Hugonotiſm, at his acceſſion to the crown. He publiſhed his reaſons, for renouncing the league, in a ſenſible and ſpirited addreſs to the French nobility; and, having made his peace with the King, obtained ſuch advantageous conceſſions from him; as could not fail to be envied, and deſired by many of his former aſſociates of the union.

1593. Decemb. 17.

the chief partizans in oppoſition to Henry, begin to treat with him, about their ſubmiſſion.

1594, Jan. 1.

Vitri's example was not only effectual to induce his uncle La Chatre, the governor of Orleans, and Bourges, to treat about his ſubmiſſion to the King; but, the confederacy being broken, by two ſuch eminent ſupports of it; all notions of a general cauſe, or intereſt, to be longer maintained, were ſoon obliterated amongſt its other chieftains. Regardleſs of their promiſes to the Duke of Mayenne, who fulfilled none of his own to them; it appeared high time, to every one of them, to conſult their particular intereſt. The governors of Roüen, and of various other towns, in Normandy, and Picardy, made either public or private propoſals, to conclude an agreement with Henry †. In other places, the parliaments, or the magi-

* Thuan. lib. 108. p. 410. Mem. de Sully, liv. 6.

† Ibid. Thuan. 417.

Book III. 1594.

magiſtracy, favoured by the deſires of the people, urged their military commanders to declare themſelves, without heſitation, for peace. What happened at Lyons, where the citizens had teſtified the greateſt devotion to the league, ſhowed the confuſion, into which its partizans had fallen; and, likewiſe, that the Duke of Mayenne could not retain, in proper ſubordination to himſelf, or the confederacy, his neareſt connexions. His uterine brother, the Duke of Nemours, baffled in his hopes of eſpouſing the Infanta of Spain *, thought, ſtill, he might aſcend to the rank of a Sovereign, within the territories of his government of the Lyoneſe. How unfortunate to him was this dream of ambition! Oppoſed, in his deſigns, by the people of Lyons, counteracted, ſecretly, by the Duke of Mayenne, he became the captive of thoſe, whom he imagined himſelf on the point of reducing to the ſtate of his ſubjects. The great intereſt the Duke of Savoy took in this cauſe, and the auxiliary troops afforded him by Spain, produced another event. In reſentment, the King's lieutenant of the province, d'Ornano, was called in to the aſſiſtance of the people of Lyons. The city, thus protected, threw off all its connection with the league. Its arms and enſigns, in the public places, were pulled down, and dragged through the ſtreets. An effigy, of a haggard female form, repreſenting a *Sorcereſs*, and having her forehead inſcribed, *The League*, was expoſed to the view of the populace; who, with many execrations, ſeized upon her, and committed her to the flames.

Various examples of which being ſet,

the overthrown league becomes deſpicable. February.

Previous to the great event of the King's admiſſion into Paris, which was now, ſecretly, in agitation †; the ceremony of his inauguration was performed; not at Rheims, the cuſtomary place, that was poſſeſſed by the league, but at Chartres. Againſt this innovation, though the hiſtory of the antient Kings of France afforded ſe-

Feb. 27.

veral

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 6. D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 1. et 2. † D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 2.

1594. Henry's inauguration is performed,

veral examples, parallel to it; various objections were, at firſt, made. The Chancellor Chiverni's arguments availed not to remove them; till ſome religious eleves affirmed, that there was to be found, at Marmoutier, a holy oil, of no leſs value than that of Rheims. As the truce was now, for ſome time, expired; Henry prepared to urge the further overthrow of the league * by ſome military enterprizes, and ordered the ſiege of Ferté Milon to be formed. But more prudent counſel, and better policy, determined him ſoon to withdraw his troops, not only, from that place, but from the neighbourhood of Paris. The deſigns ſet on foot there, by his friends, required the niceſt management; and, eſpecially, that the ſuſpicion of them ſhould not be increaſed, by Henry's appearing to direct his military motions ſo, as to act in concert with them. When all circumſtances are conſidered, the ſucceſsful iſſue of them muſt appear ſurpriſing; and the reduction of Paris, without the rencounter of arms, and, almoſt, without any loſs of lives, or blood, which was Henry's noble deſire, and joy, may be reckoned amongſt his moſt ſignal, and beſt concerted enterpriſes.

and the ſcheme of his admiſſion into Paris is concerted.

From the Duke of Mayenne's perplexed ſituation; we may judge of that of his partizans, in Paris, and of the league in general. Hated by Spain, and yet, under a neceſſity, from the war, which he would not forſake, to court her relief; ſenſible that his reſiſtence of the King's power was become vain; and yet unwilling to fall from the height of his hopes; he endeavoured to prolong his political ſtruggle, with the riſque of his being abandoned by his chief ally, whom he had highly diſguſted, and with the danger of his being forced to a ſubmiſſion to Henry; when the terms of it would be rendered much more hard, and unfavourable. So far from having reaſon to confide in the wonted attachment of the city of Paris, to his party; he

The Duke of Mayenne, retracting his feeble and deſperate reſiſtence,

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 6. Thuan. ibid. p. 413.

Book III. 1594.

he perceived the King's intereſt growing in the parliament, in the magiſtracy, and amongſt the commanders of the city-bands; and found that the Count de Belin, the governor, was, with reaſon, looked upon as the King's ſecret friend *. In reality, that party of the metropolis, which he had protected, for his own ſupport, againſt the foreigners, and their turbulent faction, was become loyal; and, though with dread, and circumſpection, promoted the deſign of the reduction of the city into Henry's power. To curb their progreſs, or, at leaſt, to balance the contending parties; Mayenne had recourſe to the ignominious and deſperate ſhift, of reinſpiriting the odious cabal of the ſixteen; which he had demoliſhed. The Count de Belin, with the pretence of his conſenting to it, was diſmiſſed from his poſt of governor; and the Count of Briſſac was ſubſtituted in his room †. According to Sully's account of this laſt officer, he had, from reading the Roman hiſtory, become an enthuſiaſt for a republican government; and imagined that the favourable time was come, for changing the monarchy of France, into this happier ſyſtem of policy. To his ſurpriſe, he found that his political ideas were peculiar to himſelf; comprehenſible, only, to a few, and reliſhed by none. As projectors are apt to do, he paſſed, from the ſublimity of his ſpeculations, to the oppoſite extreme, in the practice of policy; and, with leſs reſerve, than the Count de Belin had ſhown, entered into an advantageous treaty, with the King, for the ſurrendering of Paris. In the Count de Briſſac, it thus appeared, that the deviation from all principles, analogous to thoſe of the times, comes to an equivalent iſſue, with that of having adopted the moſt degenerate of them. His promotion to the government of Paris, created, at firſt, great altercations between the Duke of Mayenne, and the parliament, which were the more offenſive to the former, as he was obliged ſoon to ſet out for the frontiers of Flanders; in order to ſettle the

finds it difficult for him to preſerve Paris.

* Thuan. ibid. † Lib. 6.

1594.

the affairs of the campaign, with the Spaniſh general*. He endeavoured, by turns, to ſoothe and to menace the counſellors to a compliance with his will; but with little effect. At laſt, thinking it requiſite, in policy, to gratify the Spaniards, by ſome conceſſions; he allowed, in ſome meaſure, of the pretenſions of their faction to guard the city againſt the deſigns of the *politicians* and the *loyaliſts*; and partly, by vehemence, and by perſuaſion, got a decree paſſed, for the expulſion of ſeveral conſiderable families amongſt them, from Paris.

The change of the governor of the city, and the encouragement given to the outrageous faction, to reſume their loſt aſcendency, joined to the Duke of Mayenne's haſty departure, introduced a new ſcene of diſtraction, animoſity, and violent conteſt. Aided, by the inflammatory diſcourſes of the preachers; the demagogues endeavoured to inſtigate the people to tumults, and to increaſe the alarms of the governor, and magiſtrates, ſuſpected by them. As they found their influence declined, falſe rumours, bravades, and tremenduous threats, were made uſe of by them; to impreſs their opponents with conſternation †. From the large body of Spaniſh, and other foreign troops, in the garriſon of Paris, and from the known reſolution and obſtinacy of the Spaniſh officers; it ſeemed, indeed, that every thing might be feared, by the citizens, who conſpired to betray them. But the Count de Briſſac, in concert with L' Huillier, the Prevôt de Marchands, and Martin *L' Anglois*, one of the Eſchevins, conducted his meaſures, with ſo much addreſs and dexterity, that, tho' his fidelity was queſtioned, before the Duke of Mayenne's departure, the many and vigilant adverſaries of his deſign, could find no proper handle of accuſation againſt him, in the execution of his charge. Without any important diſcovery, of his

In the midſt of the outrages of the Spaniſh faction;

* Thuan. ibid.

† D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 3.

BOOK III.

1594.
the Count de Briſſac contrives to ſurrender Paris to the King.
March 22.

his ſecret management, being made by them; all matters, with reſpect to the modelling of the guards, at the gates, and contiguous ramparts of the city, and the demolition of ſome gabions which obſtructed the free opening of the gates, were arranged in ſuch a manner, that the King was invited to approach with his troops, at the earlieſt hour of the twenty-ſecond of March. Henry's diligence, and that of his officers, correſponded to Briſſac's prudent and dexterous procedure *. Eight thouſand of his beſt diſciplined ſoldiers, being drawn together, advanced in ſeveral diviſions, under experienced commanders. At the time appointed, they ſtood ready, in the utmoſt ſilence, near ſeveral gates, which were pitched upon for their admiſſion. At the ſignal of ſome rockets thrown up, the Port-Neuve being opened; St Luc firſt, at the head of five hundred men, poſſeſſed himſelf of that gate, and the ſtreet leading from it. He was followed by D'Humieres, the Count de Belin, De Vic, and other commanders, who led up their ſeveral corps; and, after them, came Henry himſelf, environed by two hundred gentlemen, diſmounted from their horſes; as were ſeveral of the other bodies of his gendarmerie. So exactly were the orders, for the advancement of the King's troops, executed in other quarters; that thoſe which entered by St Denis gate, ſoon joined themſelves at St Michael's bridge, to the diviſions of them, already drawn up in the ſtreets and ſquares. As the gate of St Honore was alſo occupied ‡, the Spaniſh and Walloon troops, amounting to four thouſand, remained ſhut up in their quarters; and their communication with ſome foreign regiments being cut off, they had no other meaſures to take, but the deſperate reſolution of defending themſelves. During all thoſe motions of the King's troops, for ſecuring the moſt important poſts of the city; no diſorder, or violence of any kind, was committed by them; or the leaſt oppoſition attempted, on the part

* D'Aubigné, ibid. D'Avila, liv. 14. Thuan. lib. 109. p. 427. De Serres.
‡ Mem. de Sully, liv. 6.

1594.

part of the Pariſians. A body of German guards only, not anſwering to the *Vive le Roy*, was charged by the Marſhal Matignon; and, twenty of them being killed, and ſome more driven into the river; the reſt were taken-priſoners by him. As if in the midſt of a peaceable triumph, the King proceeded directly to the Church of Nôtre Dame, attended by the Count de Briſſac, and the Prevôt de Marchands; where *te Deum* was ſung, and maſs performed. On his return from the church, the popular acclamations of *Long live the King*! were reſounded every where through the ſtreets; and the diſaffected, as well as the loyal, found, to their ſurpriſe, peace and tranquility commanded in Henry's name, within a few hours, over almoſt all the wards of the city.

who enters it without oppoſition or diſorder.

It was no wonder that the Pariſians were amazingly ſtruck, and many of them, in ſpite of their prejudices, charmed with Henry's conduct and behaviour. They ſaw, on this ſignal occaſion of his triumph, the exertions of his public ſpirit, and of his generous regard, both for their ſafety, and their ſatisfaction. They were ſpared the ſhame of ſuing for their pardon, and for the preſervation of their privileges, and even of requeſting ſome conceſſions, deſireable to them, againſt the public exerciſe of any other religion, but that of the catholic church, in Paris, and ten leagues around it *. Theſe acts of grace were not only proclaimed to them, but immediately ratified by Henry's edict. For the ſake of recovering thoſe quarters of the city, which were in the power of the Spaniards, without blood and hoſtile confuſion, what reſentment dictated, with reſpect to ſuch inveterate enemies, was ſet aſide. They were permitted to march out, with ſome of the honours of war; and were conducted ſo far, by an eſcorte of the King's troops, in the way to Soiſſons. Henry acquitted himſelf with equal generoſity to thoſe, who might

Henry diſcovers ſignal clemency in poſſeſſing himſelf of Paris.

* De Serres.

BOOK III

1594.

be reckoned his perſonal enemies. The Cardinal legate received an honourable invitation from him, to come into his preſence; and, upon his ſullenly * declining it, Du Perron was ordered to attend him to Montargis. The two Dutcheſſes of Montpenſier, and Nemours, were viſited, and entertained by him, with that unaſſumed politeneſs and complaiſance, which, while it ſhowed the laudable temper and manners of the King, might, juſtly, as Sully remarks, have covered, at leaſt the former of them, with confuſion. The exit made by the Cardinal Pellevé appeared like the finiſhing of his character. Being told, as he lay dangerouſly ſick, that the King of Navarre had entered the city, and was advanced near the cathedral of Nôtre Dame, "He will be repulſed ſoon by the Spaniards, anſwered he, with a confident tone; the doors of the church will be impregnable to the relapſed heretick." When further informed, that he was received there, and become quiet maſter of the city, all faculty of ſpeech forſook him; he turned his face to the wall, and ſoon expired.

The fame of Henry's recovering Paris to his obedience, did not more ſignalize his name, than the lenity ſhown by him to the parliament, and to the faculty of the *Sorbonne*, as well as to the other colleges of the univerſity. Though, by the exerciſe of ſuch indulgence, he meant to extinguiſh every memorial of that diſunion, which had rent the ſtate in pieces, he found conſiderable oppoſition made to this equally prudent and benevolent deſign. It is rare to meet with the exertion of pure loyalty, or patriotiſm, among men; without ſome ſcope given, by them, to the more narrow and ſelfiſh paſſions †. The King's friends, in the parliament, who had been ſufferers on account of their principles, could not endure that thoſe, who had been the tools of the league, and anarchy, and had paſſed decrees

Difficulties encountered by Henry in the exerciſe of clemency.

* Thuan. ibid.

† Ibid. p. 429.

decrees that inſulted the royalty, and the conſtitutional laws, ſhould be allowed to take their places, in the ſupreme court, under the King's authority; without ſome ſtigma, or animadverſion, upon their conduct. Even the more diſpaſſionate inſiſted, that ſome diſtinction ſhould be made, between the loyal counſellors, and their opponents; and that, at leaſt, the edict, for the re-eſtabliſhment of the parliament, ſhould not be iſſued, until the members of that court at Tours, and Chalôns, honourable by their exile, had returned to Paris, and reſumed their ſeats. Upon this article, however, nothing was obtained, except a ſmall change of the order of precedency, in favour of the latter: So deſirous was Henry to avoid offenſive diſtinctions *! But all acts of the Pariſian parliament, prejudicial and derogatory to the royal authority, and honour, were annulled, and the records of them erazed. Henry's acceptance of the apology of the univerſity, for the diſaffection of its members, was no leſs a teſtimony of the goodneſs of his heart. It was not, with his approbation of the penal order, that proſecutions againſt the moſt ſeditious preachers being raiſed, ſome of them were compelled, and others betook themſelves to flight, and baniſhment. To mark the invincible obſtinacy of two great nurſeries of ſuch incendiaries; both the college of the Jeſuites, and the fraternity of the Capuchins, refuſed, ſtill, to offer public prayers for the King; under pretext of their inviolable deference to the Pope's authority. When coercive methods were propoſed, and inſiſted on by ſome of Henry's council, "We muſt have patience with them, ſaid he; they labour under ſcruples, and it requires time, for ſuch people, to get rid of them."

1594.

March 30.

April 20.

The ſurrender of Paris was quickly followed by that of ſeveral other great cities in the kingdom; which, in emulation of the me-

* De Serres.

BOOK III. 1594.

tropolis, had adhered to the league. Roüen*, Abeville, and Rheims, being of that number, involved, in a great meaſure, the entire ſubmiſſion of the three provinces, of which they were the capitals. The management of the governors, and grandees, in thoſe ſubmiſſions, is a paſſage of the hiſtory which Sully has enlarged upon, more than any other of the hiſtorians. Being employed by Henry, both in ſeveral public and private negociations relative to them, he was beſt qualified to give their detail. As, in circumſtances, where their intereſts and honours are at ſtake, men diſplay both the ardor of their paſſions, and their political circumvention and addreſs; he takes occaſion, from his ſubject, to draw a few characters, with traits ſo natural, and expreſſive of the human heart, that their correſpondence to truth cannot be doubted †. Such is the lively portrait he has given of Villars governor of Roüen, and the entertaining narrative of his interviews, as a negociator with this brave, generous, and open hearted, but proud, paſſionate, and yet not untractable chieftain. In this part of the hiſtory, when the King was found diſpoſed to make the largeſt conceſſions, and demands were made on him, by chiefs and military commanders, rendered doubly arrogant and haughty, by the licentious habits, and effrontery, acquired in the civil wars; it is curious to obſerve the general ſtruggle of the latter, to attain the points of their ambition and intereſt. The airs of conſequence aſſumed by all, the magnifying the importance of what they had to ſurrender to the King, the affectation of nicety and delay, when they wiſhed to prevent others by the ſpeedieſt concluſion of their agreements; mark, ſtrongly, the characters of the men, and the times ‡. Some undertook for the delivery of places, which were not in their power; others took bribes from both ſides, and, for the ſake of the gains they made, artfully endeavoured to hold affairs in a ſtate of ſuſpence. Several cities, from ſpite againſt their

The hiſtory of the ſubmiſſion of the chieftains,

affords a diſplay of their characters, and of the times.

* D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 4. † Liv. 6. ‡ Ibid.

their lords or governors, made a free ſurrender of themſelves to the King, or, like Rheims, diminiſhed the claims of the former to merit, and rewards *. This laſt place was included in the capitulation of the Duke of Guiſe; who, notwithſtanding his uncle's perſeverance in his revolt, choſe, about this time, to make his peace with Henry.

Upon the part of the King, the greateſt attention and addreſs, diligence and diſcernment, were required to adjuſt theſe capitulations, and reduce the exorbitant demands of the aſſuming and avaritious chieftains within bounds. His own aſſiduity and penetration were ſignal, in ſuch difficult matters; and they were ſeconded, and ſometimes directed, by the uncommon abilities of Sully, who, at this period, began to have Henry's chief confidence; and, tho' without the name, or outward appearance of ſuch preference, to hold the place of his firſt miniſter. With wiſe and upright views, for the ſervice of his maſter, and the kingdom, with diſcernment of the characters, and knowledge of the aims and connections of men; he poſſeſſed the faculty of negotiating the moſt intricate affairs, without that ſubtile, or artificial addreſs, commonly reckoned inſeparable from this talent. The ſoldiers pride and fire were not, altogether, ſuppreſſed by the extenſive and political reflections of the miniſter of ſtate †. Formed by natural ſtrength of mind, and not by his temper and habits, for this employment; he preſerved in it a character of honour, integrity, and ſteadineſs, that was reſpectable in a court compoſed of military nobles. Splenetic and ſevere, though almoſt never quite unjuſt in his judgements of men, he delineates ſeveral eminent characters, unfavourably, by having drawn them in the midſt of an embroiled ſcene; when particular lights

Henry's political capacity, aſſiſted by his miniſter Sully, is rendered conſpicuous.

* Ibid. liv. 7. troiſieme partie.

† Pereſixe, hiſt. de Henry le Grand, oct. edit. p. 19.

Book III.

1395.

lights into which they were thrown, and incidents of a ſpecial kind, contributed to disfigure them, in his view. With regard to facts; the credit of his narrative is generally indiſputable, though that order which elucidates one part by another be wanting to it; and a more preciſe and particular deduction of ſeveral paſſages, in which he varies from other hiſtorians, would have afforded more ſatisfaction.

From the time of the Duke of Mayenne's departure from Paris, he had been ſenſible, that the great pillar of the league would ſoon fail him in the kingdom *. At Bar-le-duc, in the confines of Lorain, he held a conference with the chiefs of his family, upon this cataſtrophe of their affairs. Divided by their particular views of intereſt, and their partialities; he found them in no proper diſpoſition to form any general concert for protracting their oppoſition. The Duke of Aumale, naturally fierce and impatient, had, by a ſeparate treaty with the Spaniards, ſold himſelf to them, like a deſperate ſoldier of fortune. The Duke of Lorain was inclined to conclude a truce with the King; and the Duke of Guiſe was known to be bent on the ſame meaſure. To hold them together, at leaſt, by a temporary engagement, he agreed, in conformity to the Duke of Lorain's plan, that a trial ſhould be made to negotiate a peace with the King, for them all; while, in the mean time, ſuch forces as they could raiſe being joined to thoſe of the Spaniards, might ſhew the conſiderable power they ſtill had of reſiſting Henry's arms. At the court of Spain, and amongſt her miniſters, it had been much debated, whether they ought not, altogether, to deſiſt from a war, which had ſo much exhauſted their treaſures, and diminiſhed their forces, employed in the more neceſſary one of the Netherlands. The Duke of Mayenne's behaviour, with reſpect to the election of the *Infanta*, and other experience they had of the ava-

Upon the apparent diſtraction of the confederates of the league,

rice

* D'Avila, lib. 14

rice and perfidy of their French partizans, afforded ſtrong arguments for ſuch a reſolution. But Philip's political maxims ſtill leading him to maintain the domeſtic broils of his neighbours; and, from the deſire of acquiring ſome retribution for their vaſt expences, it was determined, that, throwing off their engagements with the depreſſed league, and connecting themſelves only with ſuch of its partizans as would be entirely ſubſervient to their deſigns, the war ſhould be continued on the frontiers of France; where ſuch conqueſts might, with little aſſiſtance, be made, as would keep Henry embarraſſed at home, and prove a kind of barrier againſt his aſſaulting them, on their vulnerable ſide of Flanders. In conſequence of this reſolution, the Archduke, Ernheſt of Auſtria, being arrived in the Netherlands, as governor, in the Duke of Parma's room, had appointed Charles Count Mansfelt to advance, with a detachment of ten thouſand foot, and about a thouſand cavalry, into the confines of Picardy. Having, by compact with the *Seneſchal* of Montelimart, introduced a Spaniſh garriſon into la Fere, a principal fortreſs in that province, and received the ſtipulated help from the Duke of Aumale, the Spaniſh general undertook the ſiege of la Chapelle; and, before Henry's forces could march to its relief, reduced that place alſo under his power.

Philip II. ſtill determines to ſpin out the war againſt Henry, upon a different plan.

So fortunate a commencement of the Spaniſh enterpriſes, independent of his aid, ſtruck the Duke of Mayenne with anxiety and concern. It ſeemed to diminiſh, or to annihilate the idea of his importance; and, at the ſame time, teſtified, openly, the antipathy the Spaniſh court entertained againſt him. His pride, however, oppoſed his taking the reſolution to throw himſelf upon Henry's mercy, or to offer his ſubmiſſion; when his ſtraits would ſo plainly mark it to be the refuge of his neceſſity. Yet, as happens to men, when in the ambiguity of judgment, a ſtart of fancy, or paſſion, caſts the balance on one ſide; he determined upon what was far more

The Duke of Mayenne, rather than ſubmit to Henry, goes to Bruxelles.

1594.

more dishonourable, and also unsafe. In hopes that he might be able to account for his conduct, so offensive to the other Spanish ministers, and acquit himself from blame before the Archduke, he took the * road to Bruxelles, and presented himself at that court. The historians agree, that, upon this occasion, he run the greatest risk of being detained a prisoner; and that, if the arguments resentfully urged against him by the Duke of Feria, and d'Ibarra, had been hearkened to by the governor; this, and perhaps some harsher measure, would have been followed with respect to him. But, from Ernhest's regard to reputation, as well as from other political considerations, Mayenne not only escaped this danger, but was, apparently, so much credited, in the apology he offered for his conduct, that a kind of agreement was made for the restoring of their union, and confederacy in the war. The siege of Laon, which was known to be intended by Henry, in revenge for his loss of Chapelle, proved a considerable motive to the Duke of Mayenne, to act, in this manner, the supplicant; and, to the Spanish counsel, to receive him into present favour. In this town, as the place of safest custody, the Duke had left the Count de Somerive, his son, with others of his family, and a great part of his most valuable effects; and the Spaniards, after the surrender of Paris, considered the preservation of Laon, as of the utmost consequence to maintain their footing in France. To secure this common object of their interest, both parties conspiring in their wishes, the Spanish forces, joined by the Duke of Mayenne's troops, were quickly put in motion to relieve Laon †. But, though several strenuous efforts were made by Count Mansfelt, and the Duke, to throw reinforcements into the town, and to disturb or divert the siege of it by the royal army; they only proved effectual to prolong, but not to prevent its surrender

where with difficulty he makes his peace with the Spanish general.

* Thuan. lib. 111. p. 495. D'Avila, ibid. chap. 5. Mem. de Sully, liv. 6.

† D'Aubigné, ibid.

der to Henry, whoſe ſuperiority over his enemies was confirmed by the reduction of it.

1594. Auguſt 1.

The ſubmiſſion of various other cities, joined to the compoſitions made with the Dukes of Lorain, Guiſe, and Elboeuf, proclaimed the approach of the league to its final diſſolution. Henry's circuit with his victorious troops, after the taking of Laon, along the frontiers of Flanders, had all the appearance of a complete triumph over it; by his reception into Cambray, Peronne, Amiens, Montreuil, and other places *. The recovery of the firſt of theſe towns, an antient key of the kingdom, afforded much ſatisfaction to Henry and his court; though, to obtain it, without force, he was obliged to grant, on certain conditions, the heritable principality of it, to Balagni, the governor; an elevation, which was, ſoon after, contraſted, by his unfortunate expulſion by the Spaniards. In other provinces, the royaliſts had ſimilar ſucceſs, againſt their opponents. Provence, infeſted by the incurſions of the Duke of Savoy, and thrown into confuſion, by the arbitrary procedure of the Duke of Eſpernon †, was protected, and reduced to the obedience of the King, by the ſpirited efforts of Leſdiguieres. Eſpernon, who acted altogether upon a plan of independency, ſuffered a mortification, galling to his pride, both from the ſuperiority which that commander gained over him, and from the King's appointment of the Duke of Guiſe, to the government of that province. Except Bretagne, and Burgundy, into which the Duke of Mayenne had withdrawn; almoſt every diſtrict of the kingdom bore the aſpect of ſubmiſſion, and tranquillity. As in the former of theſe provinces, a lingering, and obſtinate war was ſtill maintained by the Duke of Mercoeur, and the Spaniards; and the Engliſh Queen, by the money, and auxiliary troops ſhe furniſhed, took a very conſiderable, or, according to

Henry's forces are generally ſuperior to the Spaniards and their adherents;

tho' the war is obſtinately maintained by them in Britanny and Burgundy.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 449.

† Mem. de Sully. liv. 7.

Book III. 1594.

to the Engliſh hiſtorians, the hardeſt, and moſt burdenſome part, in the conflict; it appears intereſting, and may be ſatisfactory, to ſubjoin a ſhort account of the main events which paſſed in that quarter.

Account of the war in Britanny, and of the Engliſh ſuccours in it.

It is certain that Henry, employed in inceſſant labours, to reduce the interior parts of his kingdom, could furniſh the Marſhal D'Aumont, with only a weak body of forces, for combating * the Duke de Mercoeur, in Britanny, and diſlodging the Spaniards from their ſtrong fortreſs of Blavet; open, as it was, to ſupplies of every kind, by ſea. During the vigour of the league, the reduction of the province was impracticable to him; unleſs he had turned his whole ſtrength upon the enterpriſe. He was obliged to hazard the fate of it, for a conſiderable time; as he did, likewiſe, that of the frontier provinces of Dauphiny, and Provence †. For its protection, that he found Queen Eliſabeth had much at heart, he entered into ſeveral conventions with her; which circumſtances, and even his apparent ſituation, rendered it an impoſſibility for him to fulfil. Knowing Elizabeth's ſteadineſs in her political views and purpoſes, he truſted to it, and, in a great meaſure, laid the weight of the intereſting war upon her. Repeated complaints of his failure, and breach of his engagements, were made by the Engliſh reſident in France, and preſented to him, in letters from the Queen. The Engliſh troops ‡, inſtead of having proper or ſafe quarters through the winter, were diſperſed, ſome times about the villages; and expoſed, by that means, to the rigour of the ſeaſon, and the inſults of the enemy. A place of ſurety, or retreat, though often promiſed, was never obtained by them. But, notwithſtanding Elizabeth's frequent threats to that purpoſe, ſhe withdrew not her troops from Britanny: Such conſtancy, when fully perſuaded of the utility of her aims, did that Princeſs

* D'Avila, liv. 14. † Rymer, abridg. vol. iv. p. 134. et 107. ‡ Cambden, B. 4. p. 476.

Princeſs ſhow in the proſecution of them. At this period, by the return of Sir John Norris, with a new reinforcement of troops * from England; D'Aumont was not only enabled to complete the reduction of Morlaix, a ſea-port town; but to undertake the more difficult aſſault of the fort of Crodon, raiſed by the Spaniards, upon a peninſula near to Breſt; and which obſtructed the entrance of ſhips into that harbour. A ſquadron of ten Engliſh men of war, with ſome Dutch veſſels, under the command of Sir Martin Forbiſher, aſſiſted at the enterpriſe. It became both tedious, and bloody, to the confederate beſiegers of the fortreſs; from the reſolute bravery of the Spaniards, who defended it, and the efforts of Don John d'Aquila, the chief commander, at Blavet, to relieve the garriſon. But the valour of the Engliſh and French troops, always rivals of each other, could not be reſiſted †. The former had the glory of giving the laſt ſucceſsful aſſault of the breach, and of plucking down the Spaniſh flags; an action, which coſt the life of Forbiſher, that eminent navigator; as other conflicts had done, that of ſeveral of their gallant and veteran captains; who had received military titles of honour in France, and courted ſtill the fatal fame of meriting them, by their ſignal deaths in the field. Thus did the Engliſh, in the age of their native martial valour, bleed in the cauſe of France, and in the ſervice of Henry IV.; which, though conſequentially that of their country's ſafety, and of Europe in general, proved a memorable teſtimony of the generoſity of the national ſpirit. Henry, under higher obligations to them, than he could ever repay, entertained the moſt lively and grateful ſenſe of them; and expreſſed it, in many letters to Queen Eliſabeth, who, judicious and ſenſible, entered into none but verbal quarrels, with ſo neceſſary, and honourable an ally.

1594. October 11.

Death of Forbiſher, an Engliſh Captain. Novem. 18.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 507.

† D'Avila, ibid.

1594. A remarkable ſtory of a Spaniard and an Engliſh ſoldier.

As a ſupplement, ſuitable to what is here related, of the generous ſpirit of the Engliſh warriors in France; a particular example of it, preſerved by De Thou, is worthy of being added *. The parties concerned in it, were two foes in war, a Spaniard and an Engliſhman, who being of the common rank, their names were ſoon forgotten; but the well-known fact itſelf was remembered; and, for the honour, not of any ſingle nation only, but of the noble feelings of the human heart, deſerves to be ever tranſmitted, in the records of hiſtory. Upon account of ſome alledged infringement of the rules of war, by the Spaniards, in the fort of Crodon; a ſtrict order was iſſued by the Marſhal D'Aumont, to give them no quarter; and, if any priſoners were taken, that they ſhould be brought before him to receive their ſentence. In ranſacking the taken fort, an Engliſh ſoldier found a Spaniard concealing himſelf from dreaded ſlaughter. But the hand of the former let fall his lifted ſword, and he flew, with open arms, to the embracing of a man; whom he perceived to be the perſon who had once ſaved him from a ſimilar danger, in the Belgic wars. "You ſhall know, ſaid he, to his amazed friend, that a good office cannot be loſt upon a man of honour. I pledge now, as I ought, my life for the ſafety of yours." He endeavoured to keep the Spaniard in ſecrecy; but, being detected in this purpoſe, he was required to preſent his priſoner before the Marſhal, in obedience to his general order. He excuſed his refuſal of this demand; on account of a ſolemn promiſe he had given, to preſerve his life. "You muſt then, replied his ſuperior officers, be anſwerable for the breach of the Marſhal's command, at the peril of your own." "I know the ſeverity of the military diſcipline, ſaid the Engliſh hero, with an intrepid look and tone; and, in caſe of no mitigation of it, I ſubmit, and am ready, this moment, to undergo the capital penalty of my tranſgreſſion. But the life and ſafety of the Spaniard, I require, ſhall

* Thuan. ibid. p. 510.

ſhall be granted him, and that he be told that he owes them to my plighted faith and reſolution." All who heard him were aſtoniſhed; and the Marſhal being informed of this extraordinary adventure, cauſed the Engliſh ſoldier to be brought into his preſence. Being aſked what reaſons he had for this behaviour, he gave the pathetic explication of his motives to it; which excited in every one the higheſt admiration of his principle of gratitude, and invincible attachment to his benefactor. Beſides the praiſes due to it; he and the Spaniard were liberally rewarded by the Marſhal, for the diſplay of humanity, ſo eminent in both; and which, warmed by grateful affection in the former, was exalted to an heroic pitch.

While, amongſt the diſciples of war, ſuch inſtances of moral and benevolent action, were found; the ſchools, dedicated to humanity, and which profeſſed the early moulding of the mind to the principles of virtue, exhibited, to the world, eleves of a different ſtamp. Metaphyſics, the capital and much boaſted ſtudy, and admitted to be the foundation of all ſocial, civil, and political rules, guided the devotees of that dim and deluſive ſcience, in their determinations, in what caſes public revolts were lawful; and when the ſecret poignard might be uſed by individuals. Inſtead of the natural ſentiments of the heart, the directors of conſcience, according to the eſtabliſhed ſophiſtry of theſe ſchools, were, only, conſulted. The fame of the Jeſuitical college in Paris, for reſearches in caſuiſtry, was become not much inferior to that of the Sorbonne; and the unripe age and judgment of its pupils, rendered the authority of the fathers of the order completely abſolute over them. Accuſtomed to hear the diſputations, and demented by what were called the *pious exerciſes* of their ſchool *, John Châtel, a rich woolen-draper's ſon, whoſe father lived in a houſe contiguous to the Louvre, at the age of nineteen,

John Châtel attempts to aſſaſſinate Henry IV.;

* De Serres, Engliſh tranſ. p. 874. Thuan. p. 517.

Book III.

1594. Decem. 27.

teen, cheriſhed the thought, and formed the reſolution, of deſtroying Henry IV. He dared to attempt the execution of it, in a hall of the palace, when the King was ſurrounded by a number of the courtiers, and, at that moment, ſtooped down to raiſe, from the poſture of obeiſance, Montigny, and ſome other lords, who were preſented to him. The aſſaſſin's knife miſſing the vital part, at which it was aimed, from the change of Henry's attitude, ſtruck upon his lip, and broke one of the teeth of his under jaw. In the firſt confuſion, and as the parricide dropped his bloody inſtrument, it was not perceived by whoſe hand the horrid wound was given. But his evaſion being prevented, by the ſhutting of the door, he was ſoon detected, and, being examined, made little heſitation in confeſſing the fact. His acknowledging that he had ſtudied, for two years, under Gueret, one of the preceptors of the college of the Jeſuites, was a material impeachment of the doctrines of the order. Upon this circumſtance being divulged, ſuch a concourſe of people, in a rage of indignation, gathered around their ſchool, that, if, by the King's order, guards had not been planted to defend it; the whole fraternity was in danger of ſuffering a maſſacre; not inconſonant with the principles they taught. But the procedure of the parliament againſt the Jeſuitical order, which iſſued in an arret for its expulſion, and baniſhment from the kingdom, was a more ſuitable puniſhment. Within a few days, the ſentence was carried into execution, and both the fathers, and the diſciples of the college, who, hitherto, had withſtood ſeveral proſecutions of the univerſity, and were, indeed, too much feared by Henry, and his miniſters, took their exit from Paris; without any popular commotion from regard, or pity to them; under the ſimple eſcort of an officer of the parliament. Châtel underwent the tortures due to his intended parricide. His father's houſe was razed to the ground, and a pyramid, with a proper inſcription, was erected in its place. Henry, who was hurt, but not dangerouſly, being told that the proſecution againſt the Je-

which occaſions the expulſion of the Jeſuites from Paris.

ſuites,

ſuites, would now have its effect, ſaid pleaſantly, "*Muſt the fraternity, then, be convicted by my mouth?*"

1594.

Upon the reduction of the league;

The aſcendency of Henry over faction, and the league, being rendered, by daily ſubmiſſions, more compleat, he found himſelf in a capacity of acting, like the maſter of a great kingdom. Having, ſo ſucceſsfully, exerted his heroic labours, in quelling the inteſtine commotions which threatened the total ruin of the French monarchy, he appeared to be inſtigated by the fortune that attended him, by his matchleſs reputation in arms, and by juſt reſentment of many injuries and inſults, to enter into an open war with Spain; that capital enemy of the peace of France, and of all Europe *. Several political arguments ſeemed alſo to perſuade him to this reſolution: Philip's inveterate enmity to the King, and his inceſſant ſtudy to embroil France; the effects of which, without a declaration of war, would certainly, in ſome meaſure, be felt; was one of conſiderable force. To it was joined the view of extinguiſhing the remainder of the domeſtic combuſtion, together with the name of the civil war, by means of a foreign one; which would naturally animate all Frenchmen to union, and a warmer ſenſe of loyalty; in ſupporting the honour and credit of their country †. Enforced by the conſideration of the hearty concurrence of England, and the Dutch States, that might be expected in an open aſſault of the common enemy, and by the Duke of Bouillon's ſtrong aſſurances, that ſeveral of the cities in Flanders were ready to open their gates to the King; ſuch plauſible reaſons determined Henry, who never declined the hardeſt taſk of valour, to publiſh, in the beginning of the year, his manifeſto againſt the Catholic King.

Henry too raſhly proclaims war againſt Spain.

1595. Jan 15.

But

* D'Avila, liv. 14. † Mem. de Sully, liv. 7. Thuan. ibid. p. 515.

BOOK III.

1595.

But, ſpecious as theſe arguments ſeemed to be; they were counterbalanced by others, much more ſolid and deciſive, againſt the enlargement of the ſcene of ſtrife, with ſo powerful an adverſary. The convulſions that France had undergone, and by which her vital power as a ſtate was conſumed, afforded alone, an unanſwerable objection to this meaſure. The unaſſured quiet of the kingdom, the untried loyalty of ſeveral of the chieftains, who had made their ſubmiſſions, and the diſorders that prevailed in all the departments of government, and eſpecially in that of the finances, added the greateſt force to it. Even with the confederacy of England and Holland, it was unſeaſonable in France to ſtrain her weakened ſinews, by undertaking part of the load of a foreign war; but, without expreſs ſtipulations with thoſe powers, and manifeſtly expoſed, as the kingdom was to ſuffer more than they; it was raſh and hazardous to the greateſt degree. It was ſoon proved by the event of the war, how unadviſeable and precipitant a reſolution had been taken with reſpect to it *; and the accuſation laid againſt the Duke of Bouillon the chief promoter of it, in the King's council, that he conſidered much more his own particular intereſt than that of the kingdom, was ſufficiently confirmed.

Continuation of the hiſtory of the States of Holland.

Before opening, in another chapter, the general narrative of the events of this war with Spain, it will be proper to conclude this with a ſhort account of the condition and military operations of the Belgic States; whoſe hiſtory has been regularly deduced in antecedent parts of this work. The various difficulties, political as well as military, under which they laboured, were ſtill hard to be ſurmounted, notwithſtanding the two expeditions of the Duke of Parma into France, afforded a conſiderable advantage to their arms †. The council of ſtate, which directed the affairs of the army, and the projects

* Mem. de Sully, ibid.

† Acta regia, vol. 4. p. 143.

1595.

projects of the campaigns, was ſome times at variance with the States General. The Queen of England's commiſſioners, who were admitted into the former, rather contributed to augment this diſagreement; and, if we may judge from the procedure of Bodley, the Engliſh reſident with the States, ſeveral ſchemes and purpoſes were formed, for preventing the eſtabliſhment of their ſupreme authority; and reducing it under the controul of a Lieutenant-General, or ſubjecting the States to the ſovereignty of the Engliſh Queen. Some commercial diſputes, alſo, interveened; which tended to diſturb the good effects of the Engliſh alliance *. But Elizabeth's temperate, and judicious behaviour, remarkable in the management of all her important political connections, was no leſs apparent in her treatment of the States; with whom ſhe was reſolved to maintain a ſtrict concord. She declared her diſſatisfaction with the fomenters of diſſenſion with them. She kept up a body of her troops, conſtantly, in their ſervice, and paid them with her money, on condition of being reimburſed for that, and her other expences, at the end of the war †. During the campaign of the year 1590, Breda was ſurpriſed by Prince Maurice of Naſſau; and a number of forts erected by the Spaniards, on the Rhine, and the Meuſe, were ſwept off by him. When returned from his firſt expedition into France, the Duke of Parma could not repair all the loſſes ſuſtained in his abſence; which, again enſuing, 1592, expoſed the Spaniſh garriſons, in the Netherlands, to like diſadvantages ‡. Maurice, with remarkable natural abilities for war, ſhowed his ſingular improvement in the art of it, under the leſſons of his celebrated antagoniſt. In the ſieges of towns, by means of a ſuperior ſkill in mines, and the uſe of battering cannon, and in forming the ſoldiers to regular, and exact diſcipline; he acquired the moſt diſtinguiſhed reputation. By his valour and conduct, the affairs of the States, after Parma's death, were

* Ibid. † D'Aubigné, ibid. liv. 3. chap. 30. ‡ Ibid. Attaché. aux deux premieres tomes.

Book III. 1595.

ſo far retrieved from their depreſſed ſituation, that it was manifeſt they would remain invincible, by the Spaniards. Ernheſt of Auſtria, who ſucceeded to the government of the Spaniſh provinces, in the 1594, was incapable, with all his efforts, to prevent their conqueſt, and acquiſition of ſeveral important places *. The large and populous city of Groninguen fell under their power, during his ſhort adminiſtration; which terminated, by his death, the following year.

Ernheſt of Auſtria is ſucceeded by his brother the Cardinal Albert in the government of the Netherlands.

In a country, where every town was a regular fortification, and almoſt every village, from its contiguity to the ſea, or the branch of a large river, was convertible into a ſtrong poſt; the ſcene of war was prolonged, with ſurpriſing obſtinacy; both on the part of the aſſaillants, and of the defenders of their liberty. The vigorous conteſt continued, under the Cardinal Albert, Archduke of Auſtria, the new governor of the Low Countries, appointed by Philip, 1596, as it had done in the time of Ernheſt, his brother, and predeceſſor. The period of his † adminiſtration, and military enterpriſes, became yet more ſignal, and memorable, from the variety and importance of the events that attended it. The increaſed ſtrength of the States enabled them, not only to withſtand this laſt trial, which Philip made of his might, to recover his loſt dominion over them; but to puſh their conqueſts againſt him, in various parts of the provinces.

Surpriſing increaſe of the naval power of Holland.

For, it was moſt remarkable, that the naval power of Holland, and the wealth of that trading people, were ſtill advanced; in the midſt of all the hardſhips and burdens of the Spaniſh war, ſuſtained by them ‡. Enterpriſes, for new diſcoveries in navigation, were, about this time, ſet on foot by them; and armaments of conſiderable force and equipt at great expence, began to be ſent both to the Eaſt Indies, and to

* Ibid. tom. 3. liv. 4. chap. 28. † Ibid D'Aubigné, Cambden, B. 4.
‡ Ibid. D'Aubigné. Henault, p. 389. Thuan. lib. 117. p. 711. Ibid. 112. p. 541.

1595.

to the Southern coaſts of America. The inveſtigation of a north-eaſt paſſage to China, was attempted, under the direction of Moucheron, a Proteſtant refugee, from Normandy. Philip II. convinced at length that this people could not be retained by force, under his yoke, endeavoured to engage them, to enter into terms of peace, and amicable ſubmiſſion to him; but, as may be imagined, all his negotiations to this purpoſe proved abortive.

The war, Henry IV. now waged with Spain, though manifeſtly advantageous to the States, occaſioned, by accidents in it, ſome ſparks of diſquiet and controverſy to them; both with that Prince, and the Queen of England *. Fretted at the loſs of Cambray, Henry threw part of the blame upon the States. Finding that their juſtification of themſelves was not ſufficient to appeaſe him; they judged it convenient to ſoften him, further, by ſending ſome troops to his army, and furniſhing a large quantity of corn, and a loan of a ſum of money. Elizabeth having had the accounts of the great ſums, expended in the Belgic wars, laid before her by her treaſurer, Burley, entered, alſo, into a plea with the States, and inſiſted that, ſince they had ability to lend money, they ought to diſcharge their debts. This demand upon them was diſtreſsful; but the Engliſh Queen ſoon abated the rigour of it; and was contented, for the preſent, with an engagement by them, to take upon themſelves, for ſome time, the payment of the Engliſh troops, and to join thirty of their ſhips to the fleet prepared by her, for an invaſion of Spain.

Some diſputes ariſe between Henry and the States of Holland, and the Engliſh court; which are compoſed.

It was, doubtleſs, a plain proof of the precipitation uſed by Henry, in declaring war againſt the Catholic King; that neither the Queen of England, nor the States of Holland, were, properly, ſolicited

* Acta Regia, ibid. p. 137. Cambden, B. 4. p. 503.

Book III. 1595. cited to enter into a particular treaty with him, with reſpect to the ſhare to be taken by them in it. A league, to this purpoſe, was not concluded till the following year *; while, in the mean time, upon account of a rebellion in Ireland, Elizabeth found it neceſſary to recall her troops out of Britanny. This circumſtance, unfavourable to Henry's affairs, was, after ſome misfortunes in the war, much complained of by his envoy, as a deſertion of the King, when engaged in hoſtilities, againſt their common enemy. Expoſtulations enſued on the Queen's part, about the ill-treatment of the Engliſh in France, and the conſtant evaſion uſed about a place of retreat for them, ſo often promiſed. Some diffidence, perhaps, rather than a diſtruſt, of Henry now turned Catholic, and aſſured of obtaining the Pope's abſolution, rendered her leſs forward in furniſhing aſſiſtance to him; unrequeſted in the proper time. But a levy of men was ordered for his ſervice; and, to encourage him, not to hearken to any propoſals of a ſeparate treaty with Spain; the great naval preparations made by her for annoying that formidable enemy, were ſignified to him.

Another important affair, that no leſs required Henry's attention, at this time, than the engaging of foreign allies, was the ſatisfaction of his antient friends, the proteſtant party, at home. It was of the utmoſt conſequence that they, mortified, as many of them were, by his converſion to the catholic church, jealous of the terms of his reconciliation with the Pope, and excluded, almoſt entirely, from public teſtimonies of his favour, ſhould not be reſigned to their apprehenſions, and doubts, about his concern and regard for them, as a body of his ſubjects, diſtinguiſhed by their conſtant fidelity to him. The acts that had, yet, paſſed in their behalf, being only proviſional, and unpromulgated by the court of parliament, in Paris, had not the

* Cambden, ibid. p. 487.

the force of regular laws. It was unfortunate that the King, well inclined to make all juſt and reaſonable proviſion, for their public toleration, and ſecurity, found himſelf under a variety of reſtraints, which obliged him to poſtpone the execution of his purpoſe *. Whilſt, in the interval, friendly promiſes and aſſurances of his invariable regard, were only given them; the conſtant attention to pleaſe the catholicks, and their advancement to all places of truſt and authority, contributed to awake the jealouſy and ſpleen of ſeveral of their chieftains. With a conſciouſneſs of the allowed merit of their ſervices, both to Henry and the kingdom; they thought they had a claim, to a toleration, and to privileges of a ſuperior kind, to what had ever been granted to them. In ſome ſynods, and general aſſemblies of their deputies, at St Maixant, and St Foy, which, in the years 1593, and 1594, were held, rather by the King's permiſſion, than with his expreſs conſent; theſe unfavourable ideas of their ſituation, and treatment, were communicated, by a few zealous, and diſcontented chiefs amongſt them, to the other repreſentatives of their body: By their influence, a party was formed, in oppoſition to that of the King's adherents; whoſe principle it was, to ſeek no other protector of their churches, but Henry; and to wait, patiently, till the time of peace and tranquillity ſhould enable him, to afford them the neceſſary ſecurity †. When, therefore, the edict of Poictiers, granted in 1577, to the proteſtants, was, by the King's order, ratified in the parliament; it was not accepted, amongſt them, with general ſatisfaction. It gave offence, to many of them, that ſome debate enſued in the court, about paſſing that article in it; which pronounced them capable of all employments, and offices of truſt and dignity in the ſtate. Upon this account, ſome deputies were ſent up, with a repreſentation of their grievances to Henry; and the *Conſiſto-*

Procedure of the proteſtant chiefs, and their claim upon Henry for a more favourable edict.

* D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 11. Ibid. liv. 5. chap. 1. p. 525. Ibid. p. 564. D'Avila ibid.

† Thuan. lib. 112.

BOOK III. 1595.

Conſiſtorial faction, as it was called, gaining the aſcendent in their ſynods, ſeveral other unſeaſonable and irritating complaints, and remonſtrances, during the heat of the Spaniſh war, were fabricated in them; to the general prejudice of their party; which appeared, afterwards, in the obſtructions given, by the catholicks, to the edict of Nantes.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Fortune of the War with Spain, various.——Henry's Victories in Burgundy, balanced by Loſſes in Flanders.——His Abſolution pronounced by the Court of Rome.——Domeſtic Incidents during the Siege of La Fere.——Calais taken by the Archduke Albert.——New offenſive League with England.——La Fere ſurrendered to Henry.——Arrival of the Cardinal of Florence, the Pope's Legate in France.——Account of the Earl of Eſſex's Expedition to the Coaſt of Spain.

1595.

AFTER the full diſplay that has been given of the military genius of Henry IV. it may appear almoſt unneceſſary to inſiſt on the further illuſtration of it, by a particular recital of the actions of the war with Spain, in which he engaged. Already had the nations of Europe agreed, with reſpect to his juſt title to diſtinguiſhed fame, and generally given him the merited appellation of the *Great;* the more noble and worthy in its import; as it ſignified not the extenſion of his conqueſts over foreign nations, but the ſignal deliverance and ſafety he had accompliſhed for his own. His claim to it was confirmed by his promoting and eſtabliſhing the domeſtic peace and welfare of France; and ſhowing himſelf no leſs qualified, by his ſkilful and happy arrangement of her ſtate, to be the father, as well as the conqueror of his ſubjects. It was the greateſt infelicity attending this war, that, on account of it, his attention and induſtry were, for ſome time, diverted from this important and laudable object. Yet ſuch was the ſurpriſing genius, both of the King, and of his miniſter Sully, that the labours and dangers of a war, ſo unſeaſonable and pernicious, were inſufficient to obſtruct altogether, the application and efficacy of their vigilant ſtudy and care,

Book III. 1595.

care, to regulate and advance the oeconomy and internal order of the government *. To prevent any interruption of the management of the public affairs from his abſence, he inſtituted a council of ſtate, which, beſides the adminiſtration of the finances, had the direction of various civil matters; and took cognizance of the treaties and compoſitions made with the governors of provinces and cities, that returned to their allegiance and duty.

The appearances of ſucceſs, in the war with Spain, are, at firſt, favourable.

In any view of a war, ſuch as this entered upon by Henry, which joined a foreign to a civil one, not quite extinguiſhed; it muſt have appeared diſadvantageous. Yet he had the greateſt aſſurances of ſucceſs on the ſide of Flanders, given him by the Duke of Bouillon, and other chief commanders; and the firſt military enterpriſes correſponded to theſe hopes †. Though Philip, indignant of the bold defiance and provocation of his mighty reſentment, commanded the Archduke Ernheſt, to muſter the bulk of his forces on the frontiers of the Netherlands, and the Conſtable of Caſtille, governor of the Milaneze, to advance from Italy into Burgundy, with a large body of Spaniſh and Neapolitan troops; the aſſemblage and march of theſe armies were too ſlow to prevent the rapid incurſions of the French, prepared for action; and now, in conſequence of a truce, aſſiſted by the Duke of Lorain. Beſides ſome defeats given to detached parties of Count Mansfeld's troops: Beaune, a principal town in Burgundy, was taken; and Autun and Nuis, aſſaulted by the Marſhal Biron, ſoon ſhared the ſame fate. Even the eſcape of the Duke of Nemours from his confinement in the caſtle of Pierre-Anciſe, and his reception into Vienne in Dauphiny, where he was aſſiſted by ſome troops from Savoy, did not produce the conſequences expected from it. The Marſhal Montmorency, now honoured

February.

by

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 7. Thuan. lib. 111. p. 503. † De Serres, ibid. p. 875. D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 7.

by the King, with the commiſſion and dignity of Conſtable of France, having put his troops in motion, for his ſervice, not only repreſſed Nemour's invaſion of the Lyoneze, but found means, in his abſence from Vienne, to diſpoſſeſs him of that capital place of his ſtrength. The Duke never after recovered this blow; but, from deſpair in fortune, of which he ſeemed the ſport, languiſhed, under a depreſſion of his ſpirits, till his death. That of the Archduke Ernheſt, already mentioned, had occaſioned, alſo, ſome delay in the motions of the Spaniſh forces, from Flanders *. The Condé, or Count de Fuentes, who, until the arrival of the Cardinal Albert of Auſtria, had the charge of the army, and of the provinces, appeared, from his capacity, and experience in military affairs, to be well qualified for this important commiſſion. But, cautious, and careful of his reputation, in his firſt military enterpriſes, and having ground to diſtruſt the affections of ſome of the frontier counties and cities, which, before the death of Ernheſt, had ſent their deputies to ſolicit him to make peace with France; he did not, immediately, adopt the propoſals, and encouragement he received, from the people of Artois and Hainault, and from the exiled Archbiſhop of Cambray, to undertake the ſiege of this large, and well fortified city. Yet, to ſhow himſelf, neither deficient in activity, nor reſolution, he advanced to the borders of Flanders, with ſuch an army as he could preſently aſſemble, amounting to about eight thouſand foot, and two thouſand cavalry. While the French commanders, in that quarter, formed ſome deſigns upon Ham; the Count, to create a diverſion, inveſted the Chatelet, and obliged its commander to capitulate, in a few weeks. Having, ſtill, a reſolution to draw near to Cambray, he proceeded to the attack of ſome other adjacent places, that he judged capable of being reduced by his forces; not yet augmented to the number he expected them to be. In his progreſs to the ſiege of

1595. April.

But, upon the march of the Spaniſh troops to the frontiers,

* D'Avila, liv. 15.

BOOK III.

1595.

Several advantages are gained by them.

Dourlans; the faults of the French commanders, either too impetuous, or acting more from jealousy of each other, than with proper concert, afforded him such an advantage over them, as paved the way to greater disasters.

In the mean time, the success of the Marshal Biron, in Burgundy, was such, that the citizens of Dijon having expelled the Viscount de Tavannes, had admitted him into the city, in hopes of his protecting them against the assaults of the castle, which remained in the Viscount's power, together with that of Talan, from whence he could easily annoy them. Perceiving the insufficiency of his forces, for the purpose of investing the castles, and informed of the expected approach of the Constable of Castille to the confines of Burgundy, he dispatched several messengers to the King, with a request for his marching speedily to support him in these straits *. It was a fortunate circumstance that Don Ferdinand de Velasco, now joined with the Duke of Mayenne, had consumed time in besieging Vezou, and accounted it further necessary to throw two bridges over the Saonne, for the more safe passage of his army. By this means, Henry being allowed time to come up with a considerable body of his troops; Dijon was reinforced, and proper measures were taken for reducing the castles. Upon such occasions, Henry always thought it of advantage to discover the country through which an enemy meant to pass; and to seize any opportunity that offered, of annoying them. With this intention, and in some hopes of finding the Spanish army engaged in crossing the river, he ordered a detachment of a thousand cuirassiers, and five hundred arquebusiers, on horseback, to follow him to Lux, near St Seine; by which the enemy were most likely to direct their march. To prevent their occupying this village, and to be ascertained with respect to their advancement beyond

In Burgundy, the city of Dijon having admitted Henry's troops;

June.

he marches in person to support the Marshal Biron.

Proceeding to reconnoitre the Spanish army,

* D'Aubigné, ibid. Mem. de Sully, ibid.

1593.

beyond the river; he took the way, with about three hundred horſemen, before the reſt; and having paſſed the rivulet of Vigenne, he ſent out two of his Captains, D' Oſſonville, and Mirebeau, upon different ſides, to make the neceſſary diſcoveries. The repulſe of the latter, with his party, ſhewed the enemy to be at hand; but whether their whole army, or only a detachment of it, was uncertain. The Marſhal Biron, then, undertook to procure more ſatisfactory intelligence; but, after the ſight of the whole Spaniſh troops, having ſtopped too long, a large party, that drove D' Oſſonville before them, poured down upon him. The military buſineſs, on his part, now was, by forming a front, and appearing to make a ſtand, to hinder the enemy from obſerving how his rear was ſupported. This being attempted by him, with too bold reſolution, the rencounter of *Fontaine-Françoiſe* enſued; famous, and memorable, from Henry's amazing fortitude, and perſonal danger. After having exerted all his martial ſkill and proweſs, Biron, wounded on the head, was beat back with his routed ſquadron, towards the village, where the King was; with no more than about eighty horſemen. Never uſed to fly, and diſdaining it the more, when his troops were cloſely purſued; Henry iſſued forth without his helmet, and placing himſelf in the way of the fugitives, called upon his principal officers, by their names, to ſtop, and face the enemy. Having, with difficulty, collected two ſquadrons of them, and the Dukes La Trimouille, and D'Elboeuf, only offering themſelves, as D'Aubigné expreſſes it, "To bruſh off the dew before him," when the whole cavalry of the enemy were now arranged in his front, he threw himſelf upon a diviſion of two hundred of them that was neareſt, and broke them in a moment. As they wheeled in diſorder upon the ſquadrons behind them, Henry, by a ſecond charge, increaſed the confuſion; which became more general, by the Marſhal Biron advancing, with fifty horſe, to reinforce his ſucceſsful aſſaults. The Duke of Mayenne, the only active commander of the adverſe army, perceiving

June 5.

Henry engages in the combat of Fontaine-Françoiſe.

Book III. 1595.

the ſmall number of the King's troops, prepared, by reſtoring the order of his broken cavalry, to revenge their ſhameful rout. But unequal, in his motions, to Henry's rapid action, that ſeemed to carry him like lightening through the field; he allowed time to the King to ſlacken his charge, and, by gradual evolutions, to recover his firſt ground. Here his ſquadrons being drawn into order, and taking breath before the Duke advanced; the ſight of a large diviſion of freſh troops, which preſently arrived, perſuaded the latter, that the King's whole army had marched up to Fontaine-Françoiſe. He retired, inſtead of advancing; and ſuffered Henry, now indeed reinforced with above ſix hundred of his troops, to follow him, towards St Seine, and the Saonne, like a formidable victor in the field.

and acquires the moſt ſignal fame and advantage.

Still more remarkable than the action of Fontaine-Françoiſe, were the conſequences reſulting from it. Without any further attempt to relieve the beſieged caſtles, or to throw ſuccours into the towns of Burgundy; the Conſtable of Caſtille, as if * aſtoniſhed with the view of ſuch a combat, repaſſed the river, next day, with his whole army; though amounting, with the French auxiliaries, to near fifteen thouſand regular troops, it was much ſuperior in numbers to Henry's in that quarter. It appeared, indeed, that the Caſtilian, the chief of the moſt opulent family in Spain, had little deſire of military employment; when, in ſpite of all the Duke of Mayenne's arguments, he left Burgundy to be entirely ſubdued by the King's forces. But he was not permitted by Henry to remain quiet, in his fortified camp, on the other ſide of the Saonne †. Having found a ford in that river, the King croſſed it, in oppoſition to the enemy's guards; put to flight a large body of their cavalry; many of which were killed, in the diſorderly rout, and others, of diſtinction, taken priſoners. At the head of nine thouſand of his troops,

The Spaniſh army having returned,

July 11.

* Thuan. lib. 112. p. 533. De Serres, ibid. † D'Avila, liv. 14. Thuan. ibid. p. 536.

troops, he proceeded to ſpread terror over all the Franche Comté, till, at the intreaty of the Swiſs Cantons, he was prevailed on to withdraw from this neutral diſtrict, ſo near their territories; from which, the Spaniſh General, likewiſe, ſoon decamped. To compleat the advantage of this campaign, the Duke of Mayenne, wearied of his hapleſs revolt, and of his Spaniſh allies, and deprived of all ſhelter, in Burgundy, ſought, earneſtly, to finiſh his accommodation, already often propoſed, with the King. More fortunate, in having this tranſaction unwiſely deferred by him to this extremity, to make, with ſo generous a Prince as Henry IV.; he was, according to his requeſt, allowed to retire to Chalons, on the Saonne; and with the further indulgence, of waiting for the King's expected abſolution, by the Pope; before his compromiſe ſhould be concluded. A rare and ſingular inſtance of the ſuppreſſion of juſt reſentment, and of the energy of the nobler ſenſations of the mind, ever apparent in Henry; and exerted by him, during the heat, and in the iſſue of the civil revolts, to a degree, which ſhows this part of his character in an amiable, and matchleſs light! A truce, and ceſſation of arms, for three months, was, ſhortly after this, granted by him, at Mayenne's requeſt, to the whole kingdom; from a ſimilar motive of compaſſion, and benevolence to the afflicted people; who owed to it the ſecure and quiet reaping of the fields, and ſafe commerce; and numbers of them, alſo, their return to their houſes and poſſeſſions, which had been deſolated amidſt the perpetual hoſtilities.

1595. Henry traverſes the Franche Comté like a conqueror. Auguſt.

The Duke of Mayenne having agreed to make his ſubmiſſion, September.

Henry ſhows his diſpoſition to exerciſe lenity and favour to his ſubjects of every claſs.

While victory thus attended Henry in the field, the account of the campaign in Flanders, and Picardy, entruſted to the Dukes of Longueville, Nevers, and Bouillon, proved, ſoon, unfavourable, and, at length, extremely alarming. Ham was taken, but with an irreparable loſs of ſeveral of the beſt and braveſt officers, who deſerved, each of them, to be particularly regretted; if the death of D'Humieres

The King's ſucceſs is more than balanced by the loſſes in Flanders;

Book III.

1595.

mieres had not ſuppreſſed every other concern *. With a noble ſpirit, equal to his parentage, with a liberality of heart, tranſcending his ample fortune; ſcarce any warrior ever wore ſo much natural ſweetneſs in his aſpect, joined with the manly dignity of the ſoldier's mien. His manners, diſtinguiſhed like the genius of his mind, by elegance, were adapted to excite eſteem and veneration; yet, being more a copy of his benevolent diſpoſitions, they were ever effectual in gaining the good will, and love, of all ranks of men. Not only in the army, the ſoldiers, whoſe common father he was called, mourned his death; but the grief of it was extended over the whole kingdom. So powerful was the impreſſion made on all minds, either from the knowledge or the idea of his character! Henry, ſenſibly ſtruck with the loſs of him, was ſeen publicly to let fall his tears; and, when the advantage of the poſſeſſion of the town was mentioned, he was heard, with a depreſſed and murmuring voice, to ſay, "I ſhall never put Ham, nor many ſuch places, in balance with the life of D'Humieres." What happened, in the attempt of the French commanders, to relieve Dourlens, was an aggravation of this misfortune. Three † ſquadrons of cavalry, led by three rival generals, and that conducted two thouſand foot to the beſieged town, were routed by the Count de Fuente's forces, and the brave Admiral Villars, who would not fly, or, as other hiſtorians ſay, diſdained to make a falſe charge, when neceſſary, remained among the ſlain; and almoſt all the infantry were cut in pieces. The ſurrender of the town ſoon followed this overthrow.

amongſt which the death of D'Humieres was a much lamented one;

and followed by that of Admiral Villars, and the ſurrender of Dourlens.

With ſuch adverſe intelligence was Henry diſquieted, when he came from the conqueſt of Burgundy, and his other ſucceſsful enterpriſes; and when the citizens of Lyons ‡, aſſiſted by the rich mer-

* Thuan. ibid. p 545. Mem. de Sully, ibid. De Serres. † D'Aubigné, chap. 9. Sully, ibid. ‡ Thuan. lib. 113. p. 562.

merchants of Florence, Genoa, and Lucca, prepared the moſt ſplendid triumphal arches for the reception of ſuch a victorious guardian of the public commerce, into their city. This was a new ſcene for Henry *; who, amidſt the applauſes of his valour, and ſucceſs, made ſenſible of the pernicious tendency of the preſent war, was inclined to flatter himſelf with the hopes of its ſpeedy termination. Several circumſtances ſeemed to favour this proſpect. The long delayed buſineſs of his abſolution by the Pope, was, at length adjuſted. The Duke of Mercoeur, fallen from the flights of his ambition about the dominion of Brittany, made application for a truce. From theſe appearances, anticipating in his mind the deſireable aera of the peace of the kingdom, and of repoſe to himſelf; he overlooked, for a while, the progreſs of the Spaniſh arms, on the ſide of Flanders; and, though informed that Cambray run the hazard of being ſurrendered, from the averſion of the citizens to the arbitrary government of Balagni; he exerted not his uſual circumſpection and aſſiduity. The deputies ſent from the city, to repreſent the great diſcontent entertained againſt it, and the conſequences that might thence enſue, were diſmiſſed by the King, with aſſurances, only, that he would, ſoon, come to their relief; and, which was the worſt error, with no hopes given them, that their grievances would be redreſſed by Balagni's removal. This conduct did not, altogether, proceed from too much ſecurity, or negligence in Henry. A peculiar motive had, likewiſe, its influence upon him. Balagni, to whoſe advancement the intereſt of the Marchioneſs of Monçeaux had contributed, found a powerful advocate for him, in this fair miſtreſs of the King's affections. Her aſcendency growing, by the birth of ſeveral children to him †; it was not in this particular inſtance, only, that it became conſpicuous. Several of the courtiers, conciliated, by this eaſy channel of favour, Henry's good graces; and the ſchemes

Henry, remitting his uſual attention to the military operations, on the ſide of Flanders,

and biaſſed by his attachment to the Marchioneſs of Monçeaux,

* Mem. de Sully, ibid. † Sully, ibid. D'Avila, liv. 1.

BOOK III.

1595.

ſchemes of ſome princely eſtabliſhment for her eldeſt ſon Caeſar, and even the moſt fantaſtic dreams of the fair one's vanity, were ſo far encouraged, that ſeveral political reſolutions, of importance to the ſtate, were regulated by them. To this ſource the Duke of Mercoeur owed the indulgence granted him by truces; which he artfully managed to his advantage. But it appeared that Henry's fortune did not permit him, notwithſtanding his inceſſant toils, to forget, for a moment, the character he ſuſtained, without expoſing himſelf, and the kingdom, to ſuffer by it. While, with a remiſſneſs unuſual to him, he allowed the perſuaſions of ſome flattering courtiers to diſſipate his apprehenſions about the danger of Cambray; this frontier city, always eſteemed a bulwark to France, was, by the mutiny of the townſmen, and ſome of the garriſon-ſoldiers, ſurrendered to the Spaniſh general.

ſuffers Cambray to be taken.

October 7.

The diſhonour reflected on his military name, from the loſs of Cambray, by an inconſiderable force of the enemy, was, ſenſibly, felt by Henry. Hardly did the acceptable news of his being abſolved by Clement VIII. and of his entire reconciliation to the Holy See, being pronounced at Rome, alleviate the diſquiet of this ſudden misfortune. Under manifeſt dread of the Spaniſh Monarch's reſentment, the Pope had affected much averſion to proceed to this meaſure, which he ſecretly approved; until he ſaw Henry aſcending, by ſure ſteps, to the meridian of his grandeur. It was then, that ſome ſuch ſpeeches were retailed, in the court of Rome, as ſometimes preceded the diſcovery of the Pope's reſolution, with reſpect to any intricate buſineſs *. It was reported, that Clement aſked Seraphino Oliver, the Auditor of the Rota, with whom he often familiarly converſed, what was ſaid in Rome of the troubles of France? "They ſay, anſwered this man of wit, that Clement VIII. "by

The abſolution of Henry is, at laſt, pronounced by the court of Rome.

* D'Avila, ibid. D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 26.

1595.

" by his precipitation, loſt England to the Church; and that Cle-
" ment VIII. will loſe France by his tardy procedure." Tho' ſlow, indeed, to an abſurd extreme, Clement finiſhed the long diſputed affair, with the cuſtomary formalities. One part of the ceremony of the abſolution, grafted on the antient practice of penance, was judged too degrading to be ſubmitted to, by the repreſentatives of the King, D'Oſſat, and Du Perron; over whoſe heads the road of chaſtiſement was laid, while the doleful pſalm of *Miſerere mei* was ſung. That theſe two eccleſiaſticks, not ſo much in this humiliating ceremonial, as in the conditions annexed to the King's abſolution, may be juſtly accuſed of loſing ſight, in ſome meaſure, of the dignity of the King's perſon, and of the honour of the crown, is evident *. But it is not ſo certain, as Sully would have it, that the pride of the court of Rome could have been vanquiſhed, by their aſſuming more ſpirit and reſolution†. The moſt diſhonourable terms, long, and tenaciouſly inſiſted upon by the ſacred college, were a proof of the difficulties, which they encountered. More vigour could not be expected, from men of their rank and character; and they ſo far prevailed, as to reduce the conditions, to ſuch as might be reckoned, neither perplexing nor ignominious ones. The two articles, moſt exceptionable, reſpecting the publication of the council of Trent, and the excluſion of proteſtants from dignities and offices in the ſtate, were qualified, in ſuch a manner, as inferred no obligation to comply with them. The other clauſes were eccleſiaſtical regulations, not very material; and ſome ſpiritual penances, enjoined to Henry himſelf. Conſidered as laws, preſcribed by the court of Rome, to ſo great a King; they were extravagant and abſurd; but underſtood as expedients, which the Pope thought himſelf obliged to employ, in order to ſatisfy the diſſenting Cardinals, of the Spaniſh faction, they were pardonable in him. The mention of the re-eſta-

with ſome ceremonies that were reckoned derogatory to his dignity.

 bliſhment

* Ibid. † Thuan. lib. 113. p. 587.

Book III.

1595.

bliſhment of the Jeſuites in France, as one of the expreſs ſtipulations, is a miſtake in Sully's memoirs. When there was a diſpoſition, afterwards, in the court, to this meaſure, one general clauſe, in an article, was interpreted in their favour. The education of the young Prince of Condé, in the catholic faith, which was alſo required, correſponded with the King's own political ſentiments, who deſired not to ſee a Prince of the blood, and one ſo near the crown, at the head of the proteſtants.

Amongſt other military commanders whoſe eminent ſervice cauſed the loſs of them, by death, to be publicly regretted, at this time, the Marſhal D'Aumont, and the Duke of Nevers, deſerve to be mentioned. Both of them were men of diſtinguiſhed honour, and reputation; but there was a wide difference between them, from the manner in which the one and the other ſupported this character *.

November.

Death and character of the Marſhal D'Aumont.

D'Aumont, leſs poliſhed, in his exterior addreſs, had all the probity, unaffected candour, and ingenuity of heart, that, attended with manly ſpirit, and generous diſpoſitions, recommends the perſonal worth, and merit of every one, in the eminent offices, either of the military or civil life. With this peculiar mark of his character, joined to his valour, he was generally allowed to be the trueſt picture, in his age, of the laudable qualities of the more antient French chevaliers. His attachment to the King, his fidelity and zeal for his ſervice, were grafted on theſe principles, accounted, by him, eſſential to a man of honour. When mortally wounded, before Comper, in Brittany, "I have got it," ſaid he; and, in a few days after, without expreſſing the leaſt murmur, at his fate, he expired. The incumbrance of debt, honourably contracted in the public ſervice, upon his ample patrimony, gave him no vexation; and he thought it enough to have ſuch an argument, for recommending his two ſons,

* Thuan. ibid. p. 572.

ſons, yet in their youth, to Henry's favour. "The name of their family, and, perhaps, of their father, ſaid he, when languiſhing, will prove an incitement to them, to ſhow themſelves men of honour, worthy of preferment, and fortunes. With this proſpect, to me more agreeable than their poſſeſſion of wealth, what inheritance I have yet to leave them, will be ſufficient." * The Duke of Nevers had qualities of character becoming his high birth, and his opulent fortune in France. He had the appearance of magnanimity, was ſplendid with propriety, polite, and humane, in his manners and addreſs, and particularly attentive to decorum, and ſtudious of the dignity of his rank. But more moroſe in his natural temper, than ſuited with the gayety of the French; contracted, and illiberal in his principles of religion, even when he became ſincerely loyal; he ſet a value on his ſervices to the King, and the performance of his duty, beyond the juſt rate of it, by the rule of honour, and above the recompence that could be made, by the King, in a time of public confuſion †. Uttering, often, the complaints of a proud and peeviſh man, without any ſentiment of infidelity, he was believed, by ſome, to have died of chagrin; ariſing from Henry's imagined diſregard of him. He was an inſtance, that actions, alone, do not fix the eſteem of the perſon, as they do the approbation of the character.

and of the Duke of Nevers.

To revenge the loſs of Cambray, a ſcheme had been propoſed to carry the war into the heart of Flanders, by invading the Artoiſe. But, upon the receſs of the Count de Fuentes's army, it was changed into that of the ſiege of *La Fere*, in Picardy ‡. This place, naturally ſtrong by its ſituation, was furniſhed with a ſelect garriſon, under two expert commanders; and, as the laſt bulwark of the Spaniards, and the league, in that frontier, ſtored with ammunition of

* Ibid. p. 569. † Mem. de Sully, liv. 8. Henault, abrege, p. 379.
‡ D'Avila, liv. 15. Mem. de Sully, liv. 8.

Book III.

1595.
During the long siege of La Fere by Henry,

every kind for a vigorous defence. The siege was begun in November, and continued for six months. During this interval, a variety of important incidents, both domestic and foreign, ensued; which varied the fortune of the war, and gave a different aspect to the interior situation of France *. Amongst these, the arrival of Albert, Archduke of Austria, at Bruxelles, in the beginning of February following, deserves to be noticed. He brought along with him, from Spain, Philip William, the eldest son, and heir of the deceased Prince of Orange; detained for a course of years, in the Catholic Monarch's custody. Philip now granted, as it was said, to his daughter's generous entreaty, in behalf of this Prince, what policy dictated as convenient. He gave him liberty to return into Holland; after having endeavoured to gain him to his interest, and honoured him with the order of the golden fleece; in hopes that William might either prevail with his brother Maurice, and the States to enter into an accommodation with him; or prove the occasion of dividing them into new factions †. But, upon his appearance in Flanders, the States, apprehensive of this last intention being promoted, gave Prince William to understand, tho' in terms expressive of their warm affection to his person, that he could not be permitted, at present, to pass into Holland; until it appeared that he bore the same unbiassed regard to the liberty of his country, as when he was carried out of it, into his captivity. They only allowed him to come to Bergen-op-zomme, to have an interview with his sister ‡. Of the domestic occurrences in France, the finishing of the Duke of Mayenne's composition with the King, may be reckoned not the least considerable; as it abolished every vestige of the league, and of disunion, with Henry; on the pretended ground of Catholic zeal. Henry's condescension already marked in his behaviour to Mayenne, was rendered still more manifest. He was allowed to treat on the

some foreign and domestic incidents deserve particular notice.

January.

footing

* Thuan. lib. 115. p. 647. † Ibid. lib. 116. p. 659. ‡ De Serres. ibid. D'Avila, liv. 15.

1596.

The Duke of Mayenne's compoſition with Henry,

footing of the head of his party, which ſubſiſted no more; and, what was moſt material to him, the conceſſions granted by the King, bore ſome proportion to this vain pretence. The diſcharge of his great debts, to ſubjects of the kingdom, and of his engagements with foreigners; the three towns of Chalons, Seurre, and Soiſſons, retained for ſix years, under the name of his ſureties, with particular exemptions; and a general pardon and amneſty, ratified to the Duke, and all his adherents, who, within forty days, took the benefit of it, were the advantageous ſtipulations yielded to him. It was an affair of difficulty to get ſuch ſingular articles paſſed in the form of an edict, before the court of parliament. That one, eſpecially, which acquitted Mayenne of all impeachment, about the death of Henry III. was much conteſted; as, in every other pardon, this point had been excepted. By ſuch lenity, it appeared how Henry's heart was ſet on eſtabliſhing the peace of the kingdom. Mayenne, alſo, in ſome reſpects, might be reckoned not, altogether, unworthy of this generoſity. Tho', in the latter part of the ſcene of conteſt, an obſtinacy, unlike the prudence of his character, had been diſcovered by him; yet it could not be forgotten, that he had always oppoſed every motion of his partizans, and of the Spaniards, to ſubject the provinces or cities of the kingdom to a foreign uſurpation. An anecdote*, with reſpect to Henry's reception of him, at the caſtle of Monceaux, related by Sully, who was the only perſon preſent at their firſt interview, may ſtand alone, in place of many other proofs of the noble oblivion of all rancour, and enmity, toward his greateſt opponents, of which that Prince was capable. After embracing him thrice, Henry, taking his hand, led him to a walk, in that pleaſant park, which the King deſigned to embelliſh. He went on, at a pace too faſt for the Duke's unwieldy, and diſeaſed body. Perceiving his diſtreſs, from the ſweat, and red blots that

and his firſt interview with the King.

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 8.

BOOK III. 1596.

that covered his face, after whiſpering to Roni, "I ſurely ſtep with too much quickneſs for you, ſaid Henry to the Duke." "A very little more of this motion, replied the latter, would be ſufficient to ſuffocate me to death." "Hold there, couſin, anſwered the King, with a gentle embrace; *for this is all the revenge on you I ever mean to take.*"

Henry's exerciſe of ſuch benignity, exemplified, in the ſame degree, by no other Prince, could not fail, at length, to work its natural effect, even upon the minds of thoſe intractable partizans of revolt, and civil diſcord; whom long and fierce contentions in the field, had hardened, againſt almoſt every other ſenſibility, but that of proud independence, and of their lucrative, or ambitious aims. It produced an emulation amongſt them, to outſtrip each other in the ſettlement of their ſubmiſſions *. From its influence, at this time, the Duke of Nemour's return to his allegiance, together with St Sorlin, his brother, was haſtened; and the Count de Bouchage, the laſt of the four brothers of Joyeuſe, famous for his transformation into a Capuchin, in the laſt reign, and for his reſumption of the cuiraſs and helmet, for the ſervice of the league, brought back the city of Thouloufe, ever involved in the cloud of bigotry, to the King's obedience. The latter chieftain was created a Marſhal of France; but having afterwards got himſelf choſen into the order of Malta, he again eloped from the world; and betook himſelf to his primary retreat among the Capuchins, and finiſhed the motley career of his life, among the devout fraternity †. Henry had the further ſatisfaction of finding the antient and wealthy city of Marſeilles, when on the point of being poſſeſſed by a Spaniſh garriſon, reduced to a peaceable ſubmiſſion, by the induſtry of the Duke of Guiſe. Counteracted by this nobleman, in his wayward projects, Eſper-

Henry's ſingular lenity engages the moſt obſtinate chieftains, to return to their allegiance.

February.

March.

* D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 13.

† Ibid. chap. 14.

Eſpernon found no other reſource, but that of throwing himſelf upon the King's favour. The refractory, or diſcontented chieftains, in general, were every where allowed to take the ſame courſe. In Brittany, the Duke of Mercoeur, alone, protracted the concluſion of his agreement; which, by the mediation of the Queen-dowager, his ſiſter, and the powerful entreaties of Henry's miſtreſs, he hoped to render particularly favourable.

Though engaged in the ſiege of La Fere,

Occupied with neceſſary attention to theſe ſubmiſſions, which were of no leſs importance to the quiet of the ſtate, than the reduction of La Fere; Henry had, at the ſame time, to extend his thoughts to a variety of other objects; both within, and without the kingdom. Nothing material was tranſacted, in the council of ſtate, at Paris, without his being particularly informed with reſpect to it, or a reference being made to him, for a final deciſion of the buſineſs. In all matters, relative to the political, or civil adminiſtration, he appeared to act, as he had done in the field, from his own obſervation and judgment of every emergency. Senſible, more than ever, from the confuſion and perplexity, in which he found all the public affairs of the kingdom were involved, that the preſent war was highly diſadvantageous; he had required of his foreign allies, the ſuccours they had engaged by treaty, or promiſed to furniſh againſt the Spaniſh Monarch *. Several companies of foot, with ſome months pay, were accordingly ſent by the States of Holland, to the ſiege of La Fere, and four thouſand Engliſh troops, as Queen Elizabeth's auxiliaries, had followed them into the King's camp. But, deſirous to have ſome more certain aſſurances of the aid of England, than he had yet procured, and preſuming that both theſe powers, who found the greateſt ſafety ariſing to them, by the diverſion he gave to the Spaniſh arms, would readily enter into a ſpecial

Henry attends to the regulation of the affairs of his kingdom;

con-

* Thuan. lib. 113. p. 569.

BOOK III. confederacy with him, in the war; he had diſpatched De Sancy to the Engliſh court, and appointed the Duke of Bouillon, with larger powers, to follow him; and to treat with the Queen of England, upon this ſubject. But, before theſe envoys arrived, an unexpected event happened, which not only affected Henry with perplexity, but gave occaſion to a propoſition, from the Engliſh court, that highly diſguſted him.

1596. and the confirmation of his foreign alliances. April 9.

This event was the ſudden aſſault, and the reduction of Calais, by the Archduke Albert's forces *. In the wide range of frontier places, which Henry had to guard, againſt the enterpriſes of the enemy; Calais, from the general opinion of its being impregnable, was the leaſt attended to; and, now in a time of greater danger, was furniſhed with no more than its ordinary garriſon. This confidence in its fortifications, which had loſt that town to the Engliſh, 1557, was again fatal to it. The Cardinal Archduke, deſtined by Philip II. to be his ſon-in-law, wiſhing to prove himſelf equal to his ſecular employment, in the Netherlands, by ſome ſignal feats of arms, was prevailed on by De Roſne to make this attempt upon Calais. All the Count de Fuente's ſucceſs had been owing to the counſels of this eminent officer; whoſe capacity, improved by a conſtant courſe of military ſervice, gave him a name among the firſt commanders. Acquainted, as well as the moſt intelligent French officers, with the particular ſtrength, and ſtate of their frontier garriſons, in many of which he had ſerved; he executed the bold enterpriſe he adviſed, with that celerity and vigour peculiar to him, and that he knew to be highly neceſſary, when he tried to overreach Henry IV. Before the King knew that Calais was aſſaulted, the bridge of Nieulet, and the fort of the Riſbane, were taken. He marched immediately on this information, with a detachment of his

Calais ſuddenly aſſaulted, by the Cardinal Albert's troops.

April 13.

* Ibid. lib. 116. p. 661. D'Avila, ibid.

his troops, from the camp at La Fere, in order to throw them, as ſuccours, into it *. But, having no acceſs to perform this, but by ſea, he tried firſt at St Valery, and then at Boulogne, to imbark his reinforcement; determined to accompany it himſelf, and brave the danger, both from the ſea, and from the command the enemy had of the paſſage into the harbour. Repulſed by contrary winds, from this enterpriſe, all he could effectuate was, to get a ſmall party, of two hundred and fifty picked men, led by la Campagnole, governor of Boulogne, to paſs, at great hazard, between the Riſbare, and the lines of the enemy, over the canal, at the ebbing tide, into the caſtle. In the mean time, the Earl of Eſſex, who rode with a large fleet at Dover, had been ſolicited, by ſeveral meſſages, to come to the relief of this maritime fortreſs. By his anſwer to the King, it appeared that he was authorized by Elizabeth, and reſolved, to come to the aſſiſtance of Calais; but a † demand was made by him, that it ſhould be put, by way of ſecurity, into the hands of the Engliſh. Henry, in great indignation at this propoſal, that ſeemed the more ungenerous, from aiming to take advantage of his ſtraits, replied to it, with expreſſions of aſperity, declaring, he would rather be robbed by his enemies, than by his friends; and that what he, or any one, loſt by chances of war, could be no ſuch ground of reproach to them, as that which was meanly given up, from timidity. While Eſſex hovered upon the coaſt of Flanders, during this altercation, neither the time or place of debarking his troops could be agreed upon; ſo that the caſtle, as well as the town, of Calais, ſurrendered to the Archduke. The adjacent forts of Guines, and Ardres, ſoon followed its example.

1596. notwithſtanding Henry marched to its relief;

and, while the Engliſh bargained about ſuccouring it,

is taken by the Spaniſh general. April 22.

This paſſage, with reſpect to the loſs of Calais, and the part the Engliſh acted in it, is hurried over by Cambden ‡, in an abrupt and con-

* Ibid. Thuan. p. 660. Mem. de Sully, liv. 7. D'Avila, liv. 15. † Acta Regia, vol. iv. p. 110. ‡ Ibid. Book. 4. p. 516.

BOOK III.

1596.
Reflections on the cauſe of the loſs of Calais;

confuſed manner. It ſeems to be the beſt apology for the reflection upon Eliſabeth's conduct contained in it, that the warning given about the danger of Calais was late, and communicated in an unfavourable juncture; when the Engliſh court was damped with the accounts of the ill ſucceſs of the expedition of Drake, and Hawkins, to the Weſt Indies. There followed, quickly, an excuſe for the offenſive propoſition, on Queen Elizabeth's part *; who declared, that her intention was not to hold the poſſeſſion of Calais, but to preſerve it while Henry was occupied with other affairs of war, from the hands of the common enemy. Yet a ſubſequent propoſal, made by Sancy, and urged by the Duke of Bouillon, about retaking that town, immediately, with the help of Eſſex's fleet and forces, was declined. Tho' that favourite commander was ſo far prevailed upon, by the arguments of the latter, as to offer, upon the reimburſement of a hundred thouſand crowns, which the fitting out of various ſhips of the fleet, had coſt him and his friends, to relinquiſh his intended expedition to the coaſt of Spain; the reſolution, with reſpect to this, was obſtructed; and the Earl, having four thouſand pounds advanced to him, out of the Queen's exchequer, was ordered to ſet ſail for Cadiz. The negotiation, for a new offenſive league, againſt Spain, now entered upon by the French envoys, was attended with ſo many objections and diſputes ſtarted by the Lord Treaſurer, Burleigh, that they were ſeveral times on the point of taking their leave of the court, without coming to any concluſion. The arguments uſed on both ſides, which De Thou has ſtated, need not be rehearſed. But it may be obſerved, that the remarkable reluctance which Elizabeth diſcovered to a particular treaty of alliance with Henry IV. at this time, appears hard to be explained, or accounted for; but from one conſideration. She was perſuaded, that Henry meant to make peace with Spain, and only fought the credit

and an account of the diſputes, at the Engliſh court, about a new offenſive league with Henry.

* Ibid. Thuan. lib. 116. p. 669. D'Avila.

credit of a league with her, in order to obtain better terms*. This is intimated, in Burleigh's reaſoning with the envoys, as a capital objection to the propoſed treaty; and it is affirmed by D'Aubigné †, to have been the real cauſe of all the coolneſs on the Queen's part, with reſpect to it; as ſome information had been ſent to her from Paris, that rendered the fact credible. Nothing, however, was more unjuſt, than the imputation of ſuch an intention to Henry; who, though inclined to peace, was neither likely to ſeek it, diſhonourably, nor diſpoſed to lay down his arms, at a period, when the enemy appeared to have the advantage.

At laſt, it appeared that Queen Elizabeth, though ſtill under the influence of ſuſpicion, could not allow the French ambaſſadors to depart, without giving them ſome teſtimony of her union, and friendſhip with Henry ‡. They were acquainted with her conſenting to conclude a treaty of confederacy with him. It was, ſoon after, ſketched out, and finiſhed; but the conditions of it were more reſerved, and unfavourable, than thoſe of an alliance agreed to with Charles IX. The ſtipulated ſuccour was only a body of four thouſand foot; and it was, in a manner, left to the Queen's option, whether they were to be continued for ſubſequent years. The money advanced by the Queen for their pay, was to be refunded by Henry; and ſecurity for it given by four hoſtages. If the King ſtood in need of more ſoldiers, the Queen engaged to raiſe them in England, upon the expence being furniſhed by Henry. For the preſent year, it was, afterwards, agreed that only two thouſand men ſhould be ſent over to France, for the defence of Boulogne, and Montreuil; and they accordingly ſailed, under the command of Sir Thomas Baſkerville. As in this treaty, more of Cecil's narrow-minded policy, than of Elizabeth's uſual ſpirit, in ſupporting her allies, was manifeſted;

But it is at laſt agreed upon; tho' the terms of the treaty were leſs amicable to Henry.

* Ibid. Thuan. p. 673. † Liv. 4. chap. 15. ‡ Ibid. Thuan. D'Avila, Camden, B. 4. p. 524. Acta Regia, vol. iv. p. ibid.

Book III. 1596.

feſted; it is preſumable that, in the abſence of Eſſex, and other military nobles, this miniſter's party was ſo predominant, in the Queen's council, as to direct its reſolutions *. It ſeemed to the French envoys, that they were inclined to enter into ſome treaty, or contract, with Philip II. about the recovery of Calais; by exchanging it with Fluſhing, which the Engliſh poſſeſſed. Though it is moſt likely that this was only a ſuſpicion, it had ſome influence in diſpoſing the former to accept of ſuch a league with England, as could be obtained. The ambaſſadors found little difficulty in engaging the States of Holland to accede to it; and Henry was ſatisfied to ratify it; if not as an advantageous, at leaſt, as a neceſſary and reputable alliance, with the two only powers of Europe that were diſpoſed to aſſiſt him in combating the formidable might of the Catholic King.

April 29.

By the ſurrender of La Fere to Henry,

Before the end of May, La Fere was forced by Henry to capitulate. The conqueſt of this fortreſs contributed to abate the great alarm occaſioned in the kingdom, by the loſs of Calais, which, in reality, might prove more prejudicial to his allies, the Engliſh and Dutch, than to France. He was ſoon able to ſtop the further progreſs of the Archduke Albert's enterpriſes; who, after the taking of Ardres, found that, as his army was not ſtrong enough to keep the field againſt the King, ſo the ſituation of affairs, in the Belgic provinces, did not permit him to continue the campaign in Picardy †. The troops of the ſtates, eſpecially the garriſons of Breda and Bergen, having routed part of the cavalry, left for the protection of Flanders, made incurſions, without reſtraint, into it, and carried off great booty, in various places. Having quitted Piccardy, the Archduke endeavoured to compenſate theſe ravages, by the ſiege of Hulſt ‡. It coſt him the labour of near two months, the loſs of above eighteen hundred men; and, together with ſeveral officers that were killed, De Roſne, the chief adviſer and conductor of all his military undertakings, loſt his life by a muſket-ſhot. To his character,

the cardinal's progreſs in the campaign is ſtopped.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 676. † D'Avila, liv. 15. ‡ D'Aubigné, liv. 4. hap. 28. Thuan. lib. 17. p. 708.

racter, ſo eminent as a military chief, it is with regret that we find an odious and deſpicable view of it ſubjoined, by the hiſtorians. In it, the qualifications of the head, exiſting ſeparately from thoſe of the heart, every ſenſe of private virtue, and of moral obligation, ſeemed to be blotted out. Crafty, faithleſs, avowedly diſſolute in principles, as well as in his conduct; alike profuſe of his own, and of other people's property; the ſworn vaſſal of war, and dependent upon it for all his fame and fortune; inſenſible to friendſhip, but from intereſt or pleaſure; the worſt of the hateful diſpoſitions found in the abandoned ſoldier of fortune, cruelty only excepted, were combined in him. Yet the Duke of Parma, and the ſubſequent governors of the Netherlands, not only found their account in taking the aid of Roſne's ſingular abilities for war; but it is remarked that, after his death, the renown, and ſucceſs of the Spaniſh arms, in the Low Countries, were much diminiſhed and obſcured. Examples of ſuch characters, in which the mental powers, with all the depravations of vice may be ſeen prevalent to ſo high a degree, are rare, like the prodigies of nature.

Death and character of de Roſne.

In the receſs of the Archduke's army, the King was aſſiduous in ſtrengthening the frontier towns and garriſons of Piccardy *, and appointing ſuch officers to command in them, as he judged would diſcharge their duty, with moſt vigilance and fidelity; a matter of the greater conſequence, after the advantages gained by the enemy in that quarter. The Marſhal Biron, being left with a detachment of troops, upon the banks of the Somme, advanced into Artois, took the caſtle of Imbercourt, and defeated the Marquis of Varambon; who came with ſix hundred cavalry, to relieve it. The Marquis himſelf, and the Count de Montecuculi, being taken priſoners in the combat, a ranſom of forty thouſand crowns was paid for their liberty.

* De Serres, D'Aubigné, ibid. chap. 15.

Book III. 1596.

berty. An attempt to ſurpriſe the city of Arras failed with Biron; but, continuing his hoſtile incurſions, he pillaged various places, and ſtored the garriſons of Piccardy with the cattle and proviſions that were carried off from them. Many important affairs now required the King's preſence in Paris; and, amongſt others, the reception of Alexander de Medicis, the Cardinal of Florence; whom the Pope had commiſſioned to be his legate in France. Clement VIII. * could not have better teſtified his regard to the peace of France, than by the appointment of this Cardinal to execute this function. In general eſteem and reputation for his knowledge and experience, both in the civil and eccleſiaſtical affairs of ſtates, as well as reſpectable for the dignity of his family; he appeared to be peculiarly adapted to the temperate management of thoſe of France, in this delicate conjuncture. From his connections, friendly to its crown and monarchy, from his natural genius, the promoter of concord and tranquility; he employed all that prudence and ingenuity by which he was diſtinguiſhed, in obliterating the veſtiges of fanatic rage, and diffuſing the principles of peace and unanimity through all the orders of the kingdom. Unmoved by the murmurs of the catholic zealots, he replied, in general, to all their inſinuations about the danger of the public toleration of heretics; that peace was neceſſary for the preſent ſafety of the ſtate; and that the catholic religion could never be ſecured, while the kingdom itſelf felt the leaſt ſhock of civil diſcord. Henry received him as the friend of the ſtate; and prevailed with the parliament to paſs from its exceptions to ſeveral clauſes in the Pope's brief, or mandate, for the execution of his office; which was to be entered into the records of that court. This indulgence was not only uſed by him with the utmoſt moderation; but, beſides his induſtry to promote the internal tranquility of France, his more enlarged views of the political intereſt of Europe, appro-

The Pope's legate, the Cardinal of Florence, arrives in France;

and, by his pacific temper and prudence, promotes the tranquility of France.

* Thuan. lib. 116. p. 682. D'Avila, liv. 15.

1596.

approved by Clement VIII. induced him to be the negotiator of a peace between France and Spain. Henry, deſirous to apply, in this favourable ſeaſon, every remedy for the recovery of the kingdom from its many maladies, convocated an aſſembly of the *Notables*, or little ſtates at Roüen; the hiſtory of which will be unfolded in the following chapter.

To conclude the preſent one, no narrative appears to be more appoſite and intereſting than that of the Engliſh expedition, under the command of the Lord Admiral Howard, and the Earl of Eſſex, againſt Spain. The fitting out of this naval armament ſhowed that Elizabeth, notwithſtanding the affected nicety of her council, in concluding the league with Henry IV. wanted neither the reſolution, nor ability, of annoying the grand diſturber of the peace of Europe *. Though it conſiſted of only ſeventeen men of war, of the royal navy, and twenty-two large ſhips, furniſhed by the States of Holland; yet, with the tranſports, and ſtore-ſhips, and pinnaces, the whole fleet amounted to a hundred and fifty ſail. On board of it were carried ſix thouſand regular ſoldiers, and a thouſand volunteers, beſides the ſeamen and mariners. With this navy, the Engliſh commanders proceeding to Cadiz, firſt engaged in the bay with the Spaniſh galleons; and, having forced them to retire, under the cover of the land-forts, upon a cloſer aſſault, ſeveral of them were deſerted by the Spaniards, ſome of which were fired and blown up; and two capital ones were taken; while the reſt eſcaped by means of a bridge, at the iſthmus of Cadiz; which was ſo conſtructed, as to aid their retreat into the open ſea, on the other ſide. Upon the forces being landed by Eſſex, the town itſelf was taken; and all the merchant-ſhips in the harbour, which were many, and richly laden, remained in the power of the Engliſh. But, while a debate aroſe about

Account of the Earl of Eſſex's expedition to the coaſt of Spain.

* Camden, B. 4. p. 517. D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 27. Speed, chap. 24.

BOOK III. 1596.

bout the ranſoming of the latter, they were, after being diſburdened of their freights, ſet on fire, by the order of the Duke de Medina Sidonia. The deſtruction of ſhips, and naval ſtores, the capture of two galleons, and much braſs ordnance, together with the vaſt booty and pillage of Cadiz, were reckoned, at a groſs computation, to have coſt the Spaniards twenty millions of ducats. As there were many private adventurers in this expedition, the fear of loſing what they had gained, obſtructed the reſolution of the chief commanders, to extend their advantages over the enemy, by waiting, at the Azore Iſlands, for the coming of the Weſt Indian carracks. Every Captain hoiſted ſail for England; and the whole fleet, except the Dutch ſhips, ſoon took their courſe thither. What was atchieved by them proved a conſiderable blow to Spain; and appears to deſerve the more notice, when we come to conſider the diſpoſition that Philip II. at length diſcovered, to quit his ambitious projects, for diſmembering France, and accompliſhing the thraldom of the other principal ſtates of Europe.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Aſſembly of the Notables at Roüen.——Their Project for managing the Finances.——Diſcontent of the Proteſtants.——Amiens ſurpriſed by the Spaniards.——Siege and Recovery of it by Henry.——Interpoſition of the Pope for a Peace between Henry and Philip.

THE hiſtory now proceeds to exhibit ſome civil tranſactions of Henry's, which ſhow him to have been no leſs ſkilful in the affairs of peace, than in the conduct of arms; and eminently qualified to ſupport the dignity of that crown his valour had obtained, by the wiſdom and equity of his adminiſtration. The cloſe of the campaign, upon the acceſs of winter, afforded him an opportunity of holding an aſſembly of the *notables* of the kingdom; when, from the turbulence which ſtill remained, the more regular, and ſolemn meeting of the ſtates-general could not be convocated. It has been already noticed, how this convention differed from that of the ſtates. Sully obſerves *, that its peculiar name was invented by the financiers, and lawyers, as more agreeable to them than that of the ſtates; in which, the diſtinction of the three orders being preſerved, they ranked, only, with the common people. In the aſſembly of the *notables*, being claſſed with the nobility, they had the faireſt opportunity of diſplaying their ſuperior wealth, and magnificence, in the ſplendor of their equipage, and the train of their attendants. Perhaps, as the opulence of the commons ſtill grew in the monarchy, above that of many of the nobles, and their intereſt would be advanced along with it; we may reckon that, from this motive of vanity, ſo powerful in mankind, the convention of the

BOOK III.
1596.
October 18.

Account of the aſſembly of the notables, held by Henry at Rouen;

* Mem. liv. 8.

Book III. notables would be often preferred to the aſſembly of the ſtates; and that, as the Kings were averſe to the auguſt name, and authority of the latter, ſo the rich financiers, and men of the robe, would readily conſent to the ſubſtitution of the former in its room. From ſuch trivial circumſtances do great political revolutions ſometimes ariſe. A peſtilential diſtemper that raged this year in Paris, occaſioned the preſent aſſembly to be appointed, by the King, at Roüen; and its opening took place there, in the beginning of November.

1596.

and of the diſorderly ſtate of the kingdom, from the civil wars.

Henry's experience of all the confuſion and anarchy, which the civil broils had introduced into the ſtate, had made him extremely anxious, to find ſome remedy againſt the continuance of it. Upon his declaration of war againſt Spain, he was rendered more ſenſible of the weakneſs of the royalty; when, in the diſſipation of all the revenues of the crown, he was obliged to call, into the field, armies which he could not pay; or depend entirely on the precarious ſervice of his nobility. Impoveriſhed themſelves, in the civil wars, and, from habits of licence, prone to caprice and diſcontent, their punctual rendezvous and attendance on the campaign, might be required; but could not, always, be commanded. To theſe circumſtances might moſt of the late diſaſters, on the frontiers, be juſtly aſcribed; and the exiſtence of them would certainly be productive of the ſame conſequences. It is affirmed, by Sully, that there was a combination amongſt many of the nobles, to increaſe Henry's difficulties, upon the view of grafting, upon them, a higher degree of independence *. He relates, at large, a conference which the Duke of Monpenſier held with the King, when embarraſſed with his misfortunes, about the expediency of inveſting the provincial governours, with a hereditary right to their places, which, he alledged, would be the beſt method of enabling them to furniſh, conſtantly, the

* Memoirs, liv. 7.

1596.

the requiſite number of troops, for his royal army. Though this inſolent propoſal rather proved that there was ſome political tampering on the weak mind of this young prince of the blood, than any preſumption formed among the nobles, that it would ever be liſtened to by Henry; yet the general courſe of the public affairs, both civil and military, afforded many proofs of the decline of the dignity of the crown, and of the ruin that threatened the ſtate, from the incumbered condition, and the almoſt entire annihilation of the royal revenues. Abroad, in foreign courts, Henry's ſtraits were generally known; and at home *, he was ſometimes ſeen like an exiled Prince, without the means of ſupplying the moſt neceſſary expences of his houſhold, and table. It ſeemed, therefore, that, either ſome reformation of thoſe intolerable abuſes muſt be made, or that war, or peace, in the kingdom, would prove near equally vexatious to the King and the government.

From early habits of frugality, conſonant to his hard fortune, Henry, notwithſtanding ſome propenſity to pleaſures, was oeconomical. He diſcovered a genius for order, in the management of all his affairs, which was the more ſingular, in one of his great natural vivacity. His neceſſities, which were daily increaſed, convincing him more of the ſinking condition of his finances; he turned his thoughts more attentively to obſerve the management of them. But the whole ſyſtem of the revenues was a labyrinth, which none pretended to ſtudy, or to comprehend; but thoſe people, who found their intereſt in creating a perplexity over them. Henry endeavoured to check the arbitrary procedure of the ſuperintendent of the finances, by the appointment of an aſſiſtant-council; yet all the abuſes complained of remained in their full force; and nothing but the ſame gulph, productive of poverty to the crown, and diſtreſs to

Henry, from his diſpoſition to oeconomy,

* Ibid. liv. 8.

Book III.

1596.

and the vigour of Sully's genius,

the ſubjects, preſented itſelf*. It was Sully's ardent genius, inſtigating and ſupporting the inquiſitive ſpirit of the King, that proved ſo far effectual, as to penetrate into the myſterious tranſactions of the financiers, and to bring to light, and expoſe many of their long ſuſpected, but, hitherto, inexplicable impoſitions, frauds, and extortions †. The able miniſter, deſcending into the detail of the management of the receivers-general, and other officers of the revenues, became acquainted, gradually, with all the abuſes committed by them; and exerting ſome efforts to reform them, had the courage to withſtand thoſe virulent reproaches, which men, enriched by their artificial frauds, are ſure to vent againſt the detectors of them. At the time of the meeting of the aſſembly at Roüen, De Roni returned, from a ſurvey of ſome diſtricts, with a collection of fifteen hundred thouſand crowns; moſt part of which would have been loſt to the government.

attempts to reform the abuſes of the finances.

For a conſiderable time, perſuaded that a council, eſtabliſhed by him, could not become a combination for robbery on the public, Henry had tried various methods to engage the members of it to more fidelity and diligence. Finding this experiment ineffectual, he had recourſe to the only remaining and conſtitutional one; which was that of the preſent convention of the notables ‡. No Prince could ſhow more deference to a national aſſembly, than what Henry teſtified upon this occaſion. His ſpeech, and his behaviour, at its commencement, and his compliance with its reſolutions, were a proof of the patriotiſm of his heart; which, after the numberleſs toils he had ſuſtained, in reſcuing the ſtate from ruin, appeared to feel the warmeſt glow of public affection, upon his beholding, for the firſt time, its repreſentatives met together in peace, and in a capacity

November 4. Henry's behaviour to the aſſembly at Rouen,

* Perefixe, Hiſtoire, oct. edit. p. 19. Troiſieme partie. † Ibid. p. 22.
‡ Thuan. lib. 117. p. 694. Mem. de Sully, ibid.

pacity of turning that concord he had promoted amongſt them, to the general benefit of his people. It was evinced, indeed, by his addreſs to the aſſembly, that great, and heroic minds, are unaffected with that jealouſy, of diminiſhing their dignity and power, which others, from a conſciouſneſs of weakneſs, and inability to ſupport their authority, are apt to diſcover. After declaring that he had not called them together, as ſome of his predeceſſors had done, to approve, implicitly, his will and pleaſure, but to receive their advice, as a national council, in the moſt important concerns of the public, and to follow it with attention; he added, "Theſe are ſentiments, which Kings and conquerors have ſeldom expreſſed; eſpecially when their grey hairs, and their experience, entitl d them to demand a blind obedience; but the ſincere affection I feel for the people of my kingdom, and my eager deſire to promote, by any means, their welfare, incite me, not only to deſpiſe this formal, and arbitrary rule of Princes, but, on account of the public good, to eſteem every thing eaſy and honourable for me." Henry, having delivered his ſpeech, withdrew with his train of attendants, and moſt of the members of his council; that it might be apparent that he permitted the aſſembly to proceed, with all freedom, in their deliberations.

marks his true magnanimity and patriotiſm.

The general account of the procedure and reſolutions of this aſſembly of the notables, as ſketched out in the memoirs of Sully, is prefaced and interſperſed, with ſeveral political reflections, and arguments; from which the little ſignificance, or abſolute inutility, of ſuch national conventions, to any important purpoſe of legiſlation, is inferred *. Upon the principles, and in the uſual ſtrain of the favourers of monarchy, and the adverſaries of a mixed, or ariſtocratical government; he conſiders the difference of opinion, the emu-

* Ibid.

BOOK III.

1596. General conſiderations with reſpect to the utility of the ſtates.

emulation in debate, the party-ſpirit, and the oppoſition of intereſt, which take place in them, as invincible impediments, both to the unanimity, and the wiſdom of their determinations. Yet, in various nations, the moſt wiſe, and juſt laws, have iſſued from popular aſſemblies; and, unleſs we ſuppoſe that Kings and their miniſters are born with a legiſlative genius, the ſame objection, with almoſt equal force, may be made to the debates, and diſſenſions, that ariſe in the councils of Princes. Sully's hiſtory of Henry's council exemplifies diſagreement in opinion, jealouſy of each other, amongſt its members, and, in his conception, no leſs groſs errors in judgment, than any ariſtocratical aſſembly could commit. In France, when the government had aſſumed both the form and ſpirit of a monarchy; they long complained, that the meetings of the notables, and of the ſtates-general, were productive of little national benefit. It would have been, indeed, a miracle, in politics, if, ſummoned together, not above once or twice, in a reign, and then, generally, upon ſome particular project of the court; thoſe aſſemblies had diſcovered a capacity to invent, and apply the proper remedies to the numberleſs diſorders, and abuſes, that were complained of, and felt, in all the branches of government. In effect, diſcarded from the political ſyſtem of the ſtate, as they were excentric to it, they were preſerved in exiſtence, only to uphold, in the times of confuſion, the unſtable fabric of the ſovereign power. Whilſt they anſwered this general purpoſe, and that of giving the public ſanction to the ſubſidies, the Kings were jealous of their exertion of legiſlative powers, and ſuſpected their acts and decrees; and with ſome reaſon, as they proceeded, often, upon the old ariſtocratical plan. It is one of Sully's exceptions to the procedure of the ſtates, at this time, that they conformed not their deciſions to the change that had enſued in the government; but revived obſolete ſtatutes and regulations. Upon theſe, however, the liberties and privileges of the nobles being ſupported, it was not ſurpriſing, that they endeavoured

ed to preſerve them in force. From the abſtract De Thou has given of the decrees that were paſſed, in the aſſembly *, it appears that ſeveral of them were calculated in favour of the nobility.

It may be reckoned that the ariſtocratic ſpirit had alſo conſiderable influence, in dictating the new project of the aſſembly, with reſpect to the management of the revenues †. It was propoſed that a council, having, as Sully reports, the deſignation of the *Council of Reaſon*, ſhould be eſtabliſhed. Its members were, firſt, to be nominated by the aſſembly, and, afterwards, by the ſovereign courts. To this council, half of the entire revenue was to be aſſigned, under the charge, and obligation of paying out of it, all the debts, and arrears, due by the crown, and the ſalaries and penſions of the civil officers; and likewiſe, the expences of all public works. The other part was to be retained by the King, for the maintenance of his houſhold, for his charges in war, in embaſſies, and foreign tranſactions; and in the payment of the officers of his court. It was eſtimated, at a groſs computation, that the whole revenues might amount to thirty millions of livres; or, as De Thou ſtates the account of them, to nine million, eight hundred thouſand crowns. The deficiency, that might be ſuppoſed, in this eſtimate, was to be ſupplied by a new tax. So ſtrange a project, which, beſides being diſhonourable and injurious to the King, appeared to be liable to various objections, that proved it to be inexpedient, and impracticable, was, yet, by Henry's ſeeming approbation of it, allowed to be ſo far proſecuted, that this council of reaſon was formed, by the election of the *notables*. It was, as Sully relates it, his private advice to his maſter, not to reject the reſolution of the aſſembly, as his council had voted; but to ſuffer its chimerical ſcheme to paſs into experiment; which would, infallibly, iſſue in the proof of its abſurdity,

Project of the ſtates for the management of the revenue.

Their appointment of a *council of reaſon*;

* Thuan. lib. 117. p. 696.

† Ibid.

Book III.
1596.

dity, and in its quick abortion. Henry, having made choice of the beſt, and moſt improveable part of the revenue, for his portion, gave up the other, to the council of reaſon. The predicted conſequence ſpeedily enſued. The oeconomical council, reſponſible for the debts of the crown, without ſufficient funds, or credit; was preſently entangled in a maze of difficulties. Incapable, by any efforts, to extricate themſelves, at the end of three months, its members petitioned the King to be diſcharged, from their too preſumptuous and impracticable function. The reſult of the whole was, that Henry became more abſolute maſter over his own council of the finances; and, by introducing Sully, firſt, into the principal management, and then into the office of ſuperintendent of them, brought about the moſt ſignal, and momentuous reformation of their abuſes; and the improvement of all the branches of them. The particular account of it, is only to be found in the memoirs of this able and induſtrious ſtateſman. Thoſe who know, that the firſt edition of them diſcovers their compilement by ſecretaries, and that the more approved publication of them has undergone alterations, in form and ſtyle, regret the imperfection of the original memoirs, as a loſs to hiſtory, which can never be fully repaired.

which iſſues in Henry's attainment of the more abſolute diſpoſal of them.

Whilſt the winter was ſpent in the deliberations of the ſtates, and in raiſing ſubſidies for the enſuing campaign; Henry had a reſpite from that inceſſant action, and labour, in which it ſeemed to be his fortune, in life, to be ever employed. The entertainments uſual in the metropolis, at that ſeaſon, were promoted, and multiplied, by the peculiar reliſh, which the uncommon tranquility of the ſtate, and Henry's mild adminiſtration, added to them. Ballets, and plays, were given, in their turns, by the chief nobility; who ſtrove to excell one another, in the ſplendor and elegance of them. Gallantry, unmixed with military adventures, or only with their dra-

While the court diſplays much gaiety, and the union of the catholics with Henry takes place;

matic

1597.

matic ſhow, had alſo its ſhare in them *. The language which the Cardinal Legate conſtantly held about the mediation of a peace, and towards which it was known he had taken ſome ſteps, had a great influence in calming the minds of the moſt diſaffected and turbulent; and the violent catholicks, finding no encouragement given by him, to their fanatical or factious extravagancies, began to renounce, or forget them, amidſt the general enjoyment of peace that diffuſed itſelf. Of all the parties, the proteſtants, believing themſelves to be neglected and diſregarded by Henry, diſcovered, about this time, the moſt diſcontent. Having waited ſo long, for what they accounted the recompence due from him, for the blood of their families ſhed in his behalf, and for their many and faithful ſervices; they now loſt all patience, on account of the delay that was made, about the conceſſion of a more favourable edict. One principal reaſon which the King had for deferring it was the cauſe of their diſtruſt and fear. He wiſhed, before proceeding to this neceſſary and juſt meaſure, to have his reconciliation with the court of Rome entirely completed; and, by that means, a general domeſtic peace reſtored. The more they ſaw this amicable coalition take place, their apprehenſions of his becoming alienated from them increaſed †. To pacify them, in the mean time, Henry, at their requeſt, gave them permiſſion to hold an aſſembly of their deputies at Loudun. Under this authority, the Dukes of Bouillon and Trimouille, as well as their other inferior chieftains, repaired to it. The report made, at court, of the ſpeeches delivered, and of the remonſtrances framed, in their meetings, gave public offence and jealouſy of their deſign ‡. A council was called by the King, to deliberate upon it; and to conſider of a requeſt that had been made by them, for ſending commiſſioners to treat with them, upon the articles of the new edict. Upon this occaſion, ſome catholic counſellors

the proteſtant chiefs diſcover great diſcontent.

* D'Avila, liv. 15. † Thuan. lib. 117. p. 690. ‡ D'Aubigné, liv. 5. chap. 1. D'Avila, ibid.

BOOK III.

1597.

were inclined to blow up the ſparks of reſentment. But, to their ſurpriſe, and the King's great ſatisfaction, ſo far was this ſpirit of enmity and diſcord abated, that the Duke of Mayenne, the late head of the league, was the firſt to oppoſe their motions. In conſequence of the opinion he gave, which, honourably for his character, expreſſed his renunciation of former animoſity, in a queſtion that concerned the peace of the kingdom; it was reſolved, that ſome proper commiſſioners ſhould be ſent to the aſſembly of the proteſtants, to confer with them upon their demands; and to ſketch out, in concert with them, the articles of an edict. Vic D' Emery, counſellor of ſtate, and Calignon, Chancellor of Navarre, both eminent lawyers, were fixed upon, for this purpoſe, by the King. De Thou, who, about this time, attained the rank of firſt preſident in the parliament, and the Count de Schomberg, were firſt appointed in the commiſſion. But they were excuſed from acting immediately, on account of their being employed in managing a treaty with the Duke of Mercoeur.

But by the moderate and wiſe procedure of the King's council;

a treaty with them for a new edict is ſet on foot.

The gay diverſions of Paris ſtill proceeded; and, in the midſt of debates about the finances, the ſcheme of the enſuing campaign remained unſettled; when the news of Amiens being taken by the Spaniards came, like the ſudden * burſt of thunder, to amaze and confound the court. It is ſcarcely to be imagined, what an exceſſive alarm, and general diſmay, aroſe, upon this unlucky intelligence being ſpread abroad. The court and city, alike, felt the conſternation †; and the King, contagiouſly, for ſome ſpace of time, was ſeen affected with the moſt gloomy ideas of this diſaſter. It was viſible, that the vivacity of the French was changeable into depreſſion, from adverſe accidents; and, alſo, that the apparent tranquility of the ſtate was eaſily ſuſceptible of perturbation. The over-

March 2.

The utmoſt alarm is taken at court, on account of the ſurpriſe of Amiens.

* Thuan. lib. 118. p. 735. D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 17. † Mem. de Sully, liv. 19.

overthrown hopes of the diſaffected ſeemed to revive. The Duke of Mercoeur diſcontinued his treaty; and the proteſtant chiefs, by their ſullen feceſſion, contributed to weaken the King's army. Henry was the firſt in reſuming his wonted intrepidity; and, as if he had been blameable for the late intermiſſion of his military labours, he was heard to ſay, "I have long enough played the part of the King of France. It is time for me to reſume that of the King of Navarre." In a juſt eſtimate, the loſs of Amiens, the capital of Picardy, and the key, on that ſide, to the metropolis, and the center of the kingdom, was really alarming, and a dangerous addition to the enemy's conqueſts on the frontiers. It was a large, populous, and well fortified place; and preſented, to the King's view, all the difficulties and accidents that might attend a long, tedious, and expenſive ſiege, which was the moſt troubleſome of all military operations. But there was nothing ſo formidable in this poſſeſſion of Amiens by the Spaniards, as was generally apprehended. It was taken by ſurpriſe; and, by one of thoſe ſtratagems, which are very rarely ſucceſsful. One Spaniſh Captain's attention and artifice had effectuated the exploit. Teillo de Portocareiro, governor of Dourlens, who knew the city, when in the power of the league, and underſtood that, from a vain preſumption in its numerous militia, it had declined receiving a garriſon of regular troops, thought it no impracticable ſcheme to attempt to ſurpriſe one of the gates; which, in the day-time, were careleſsly guarded by the city-bands. He choſe Sunday for executing his ſtratagem, when attendance on maſs thinned the irregular guards. An ambuſcade, of a ſufficient number of troops, was prepared; and, by a night-march, lodged within the proper diſtance of the city. Two or three waggons, loaded with ſacks of fruit, and driven on, by ſome ſoldiers, in the diſguiſe of peaſants, were made advance towards the draw-bridge of the gate. Upon its being let down, without ſuſpicion, one of the carts, in paſſing it, was induſtrioufly overturned. The few guards

Account of the ſtratagem of the Spaniards.

Book III.

1597.

were ſtabbed by the ſoldiers, and Portocareiro, advancing with four thouſand five hundred ſoldiers, found eaſy acceſs into the town; and ſoon commanded the ſubmiſſion of the aſtoniſhed inhabitants. As their obſtinate refuſal of a garriſon, and not the King's neglect, expoſed the city to be ſurpriſed in this manner; ſo the atchievement itſelf was no proof of the ſuperiority of the enemy's forces in that quarter. The contrary happened at this time to be true. The Archduke * never found ſo much difficulty in recruiting his army; and his want of money, which principally gave occaſion to it, was likely to produce mutiny, and deſertion among his troops †. Philip, in the end of the preceeding year, to ſave his treaſure, had ſtopt the premiums allowed to the merchants and bankers; and, by this procedure, as formerly happened, the whole courſe of pecuniary tranſactions and exchange, over Italy and Germany, as well as in Spain, and in the Netherlands, was thrown into confuſion.

Philip II. in ſtraits for money, cauſes again a general ſtop of exchange.

When Henry, in defiance of apparent difficulties, not only diſregarded the propoſals ſtill made by the Cardinal Legate for negociating a peace ‡, but declared, that he would not hear of them, until Amiens was recovered; it ſeemed, to many, that he embraced too headſtrong and hazardous a reſolution. Yet the trial of his abilities, in this perplexing conjuncture, diſcovered how much they were ſuperior to the eſtimate, both of his friends and of his enemies. By the help of Sully's induſtry and circumſpection, in the affairs of the finances, he quickly found a reſource for the neceſſary ſupply of money, from which, Philip II. with all the wealth of the Indies, had excluded himſelf §. An army, not numerous indeed, but equal to the enterpriſe, compoſed of the beſt troops, and provided with a train of five and forty pieces of cannon, inveſted Amiens, in the month of May. As had been foreſeen, the Spaniards,

The diſaſter of the ſtate, by the loſs of Amiens, is ſurmounted by Henry;

May.

* Thuan. ibid. Sully, ibid. de Serres. † Ibid. lib. 117. p. 711. D'Avila, ibid. ‡ Mem. de
§ D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 17.

ards, ſenſible of the vaſt importance of the place, had increaſed its garriſon to above ſix thouſand men; and Portocareiro appeared determined to hold the conqueſt he had made, and that highly raiſed his fame, to the laſt extremity. The defence, accordingly, was obſtinate, and the ſiege was prolonged to the end of the ſummer. But, in compariſon with the hardſhips that Henry's troops uſually encountered, upon ſuch occaſions, it proved rather a kind of recreation to them. Such order was eſtabliſhed, with reſpect to every thing in the camp; and ſuch proviſion made for all the military exigencies, and even for the convenient and agreeable accommodation of the officers and ſoldiers, that it was ſaid, as D'Aubigné reports *, that the King *had brought Paris before Amiens*. The ladies of the court, as well as Henry's miſtreſs, came to the camp, as the place of entertainment †. Sully carried to it fifteen hundred thouſand crowns, every month, for the payment of the troops; who were never before acquainted with ſuch regular diſburſements of their arrears. The whole ſcene of the ſiege, which appeared, in the proſpect, ſo tremendous to the court, afforded a ſignal teſtimony of the advantage already gained by the dawn of domeſtic peace; and which Henry's aſſiduous ſuperintendence of every branch of the political and civil government, was ſeen, thus early, to have promoted. Sully ‡ remarks, that it was not intermitted, during his occupations in the camp; and that, while the ſiege of Amiens laſted, the number of letters he received from the King, relative to his finances, or affairs of ſtate, made up a moſt ſurpriſing collection.

Book III. 1597.

whoſe reſtoration of order in the finances becomes conſpicuous.

The great trial for the relief of Amiens was now made, by the Archduke marching up with his army, drawn together with difficulty, but which, in number, nearly equalled that of the King. The hiſtorians vary, indeed, with reſpect to this point; and their accounts of the conduct and manoeuvres

Septem. 15.

* Ibid. † Ibid. liv. 9. Than. lib. 118. p. 738. ‡ Ibid.

Book III. 1597.

vres of the generals, on both ſides, do not altogether correſpond *. It is ſaid, that the Archduke had an opportunity of penetrating, through the King's camp, into the town, and, perhaps, of effectuating a greater atchievement, which he let ſlip, from too much caution. Nothing but experience in war, can teach the advantage that may be taken of the firſt ſurpriſe of the enemy's army, and direct to the improvement of thoſe deciſive moments, upon which it depends. But the aſſault of Henry's trenches, and camp, if it had been practicable, was an affair that exceeded the Archduke's capacity in the military ſcience. He found himſelf, next day, after the firſt advancement of his light troops towards the King's † works, in ſuch a ſituation, that it was plain he knew not what was to be done. He retreated, therefore, without having thrown one ſingle company of ſoldiers into Amiens, or given any diſturbance that was conſiderable, to the ſiege. D'Avila, generally partial to the Italian and Spaniſh generals and ſoldiers, magnifies the military ſkill and diſcipline they ſhowed in retiring, without being forced to a battle, or incurring any hurtful aſſault, from Henry. But Sully ‡ aſſures us, that the King was not diſpoſed to any great effort, to prevent their retreat; from a prudent reſolution to preſerve the advantage he had gained, in reducing the town. It was ſoon evinced to be final, by Amiens being ſurrendered by the Marquis of Montenegro, after Portocareiro's death, within ten days. As nothing of importance was accompliſhed, by either of the armies, in the ſhort remainder of the campaign; it proved, alſo, to be the concluſive ſcene of the war with Spain. In the reduction of Amiens, it may be proper to obſerve, that the Engliſh auxiliary troops, to the number of four thouſand, bore their ſhare of military toil, and fame. By the furniſhing of them, Eliſabeth ſhowed, notwithſtanding her reſerve in the laſt treaty, that the ſupport of the French monarchy, againſt

Vain effort of the Archduke to relieve Amiens;

Septem. 25. which ſurrenders to the King.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 247. D'Avila, ibid. Mem. de Sully. † D'Avila, ibid. D'Aubigné, chap. 18. ‡ Ibid. liv. 9.

againſt the invaſions of Spain, and eſpecially in favour of Henry IV. was an object, too intereſting to be ever forſaken or neglected by her. BOOK III. 1597.

The foreign war, as well as the domeſtic flame which agitated the kingdom, was now brought to ſuch a period, that Henry had it in his power to extricate France, with honour, from the one, and to extinguiſh all the remains of the other. Before Amiens was taken, various ſollicitations had been uſed, by the Cardinal legate, with the King, to allow of a treaty of peace; with reſpect to which, it was known, that the Archduke, having the proſpect of his marriage with the Infanta of Spain, was well inclined. To obviate the ſcruple, which two ſuch adverſaries, as Henry and Philip, entertained, about either of them appearing to be the firſt to yield to an agreement; the Cardinal had diſpatched Father Bonaventure Calatagironne, the general of the Franciſcans, to the court of Spain; who, after ſounding the inclinations of the Catholic Monarch, had proceeded to Rome, and was returned now into France, with an expreſs commiſſion from the Pope, to propoſe a conference for a treaty, under the mediation of his Holineſs. Henry † permitted Villeroy, the Secretary of State, to meet with Ricchardot, Preſident of the cabinet-council of Bruſſelles; who agreed that a congreſs of deputies, on the part of their maſters, ſhould be opened; and that Vervins, in the extremities of Piccardy, ſhould be fixed on, for the place of it. Several envoys were, accordingly, appointed to repair thither, in the beginning of the year. Within his kingdom, Henry ſaw no oppoſition that he could not eaſily diſſipate. That ſhadow of it, yet maintained by the Duke of Mercoeur, in Brittany, became, after the Archduke's retreat from Amiens, almoſt entirely deſpicable. It was only neceſſary ‡ that the King ſhould ſhow himſelf, with a detachment of his troops, in that province, to cut off every refuge which that dupe of his vain ambition could find, either

The interpoſition of the Pope, to procure a treaty of peace between Henry and Philip II.

† De Serres, D'Avila, ibid. Thuan. lib. 120. p. 777. ‡ Sully, ibid.

Book III. 1597. either in the Spaniſh ſuccours, or in the towns and caſtles that he retained in his power. The advancement of the winter only deferred his fate, till the following year. In the frontiers of Dauphiny and Provence, the hoſtilities, waged by the Duke of Savoy, reſembled the efforts of an impotent foreign enemy, who endeavoured to preſerve ſome priſes he had made, in the time of confuſion, by incurſions which could not be long ſupported; and were deſperate, when the internal commotions of the provinces had ſubſided.

The behaviour of the proteſtant chiefs, who, unſeaſonably, ſhowed an inclination to ſtand upon terms with the King, was an incident rather offenſive in its appearance, than prejudicial to the King's affairs, and more a mark of ſpleen, and diſſatisfaction, perhaps excuſable in them, than of a diſpoſition to abate of their loyalty, and due obedience. When the catholicks of almoſt every denomination, and order, in the kingdom, had been allowed to treat with the King, they thought themſelves, in the end, entitled to make their demands. The abſence of their military chiefs from the ſiege of Amiens, diſguſted the King, and was a circumſtance that might be improved by their adverſaries, to their diſadvantage *. Senſible of the error into which they had fallen, the Dukes Bouillon and Tremouille raiſed ſome companies of foot, and reſolved to march them to the ſiege. But, being too late to perform this ſervice, the credit of the intention with reſpect to it was loſt. Henry was too prudent, and too equitable, to animadvert upon this delinquency; and, as his ſucceſs at Amiens made him ſoon forget it, ſo it is ſaid to have rendered them more tractable, upon the articles of the new edict.

* Thuan. lib. 118. p. 947. D'Aubigné, liv. 5.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Motives of Henry and Philip to conclude the Peace of Vervins.——Articles of this famous Treaty.——Death of Philip II. and his political Teſtament.——Conceſſion of the Edict of Nantes, to the Proteſtants.——Abſtract of its Articles politically conſidered.——Oppoſition to it ſurmounted.——Concluſion and Review of the general Subject of the Hiſtory.——Characteriſticks of the Genius and Reign of Henry IV.——The grand Project for the Peace of Europe formed by Henry and Queen Eliſabeth.——Sketches of the ſubſequent Hiſtory of France, till the fatal Death of Henry IV.

THE peace treated of at Vervins, between the envoys of Philip II. and Henry IV. was ſincerely deſired by both theſe Princes. The former was urged to it, by motives, not ſo apparent, but no leſs intereſting, and powerful, than the latter. Philip, arrived at that age of life, when the moſt eager ambition remits its vigour, or ſickens over its projects, wiſhed to wind up, in peace, his unaccompliſhed ſchemes, and the feeble remainder of his days *. He deſired to deliver a young unexperienced Prince, to whom his ſcepter was ſoon to fall, from the burden of a war, which he found difficult for himſelf to ſupport; and in which the late campaign had not correſponded to his hopes. His intention of marrying his daughter to the Cardinal Archduke, and of transferring the ſovereignty of the Netherlands to her and her ſpouſe, likewiſe engaged Philip to embrace the counſels of peace, as moſt favourable to this important purpoſe. Henry underſtood thoſe inducements his grand

BOOK III. 1598.

Motives determining Henry and Philip to a peace.

* Mem. de Sully. Ibid. De Serres. Pereſixe, Hiſtoire de Henry le Grand, oct. edit. p. 238.

Book III. 1598.

adverſary had to wiſh a termination of the war. He, wiſely, diſſembled his own inclinations towards it; and, having every advantage that his vigour in arms, and his military reputation, gave him over Philip, he determined, in the articles of peace, to ſtand upon this natural ſuperiority, and to require them to be ſuch, as might be both ſafe and honourable to himſelf, and advantageous, in their conſequences, to his allies. His firmneſs eaſily attained this object. From the commencement of the conferences, it was underſtood, and in a manner agreed to, by the Spaniſh commiſſioners, that the reſtitution of all places, in the dominions of France, taken by Philip, ſhould be the baſis of the future treaty.

Henry's apology to the court of England, for the treaty with Spain, founded in reaſon.

When the ground of an accommodation with the Catholic King was aſcertained, Henry judged it neceſſary to diſpatch Hurault de Maſſy into England *, with ſpecial information of the propoſals for peace; and to ſignify the probability there was of his concluding an advantageous one. Beſides requeſting the concurrence of Queen Eliſabeth, and of the ſtates of Holland, in the treaty, every thing was ſaid, by the envoy, to teſtify Henry's invariable attachment to them, as his moſt natural and faithful allies; from a connection with whom, and a regard to whoſe intereſt, unleſs incompatible with the ſafety of his own ſtate, neither this, nor any future agreement with Spain, ſhould ever alienate him. In this declaration, Henry ſpoke with far more ſincerity than is uſual among Princes, upon ſuch occaſions. His native, and known enmity to the court of Spain, and the houſe of Auſtria, afforded a ſufficient proof, that nothing but the neceſſitous condition of France, exhauſted, as no other kingdom in Europe had been, could have induced him to lay aſide his arms, and forbear the proſecution of the war, againſt ſo inveterate and irreconcileable an adverſay. But the words, uſed in every offen-

* Thuan. lib. 120. p. 782. Cambden, B. 4. p. 545.

offenſive confederacy, that none of the allies were to make peace without the conſent of the reſt, were urged, by ſome of the Engliſh council, as an obligation upon Henry, not to conclude a ſeparate treaty. It was a point, however, too weak to be held; and explained upon too many occaſions, not to be underſtood by the Queen and court of England; who knew, as Eliſabeth, not long before *, had told the States of Holland, that a contract, turning to the evident prejudice of a community, or kingdom, could not be binding upon it. As the political argument about the imminent danger to which the States would be expoſed, by the want of all diverſion of the Spaniſh forces, was next inſiſted on; an argument that ſeemed intereſting, both to France and England; it was determined that Eliſabeth ſhould ſend ambaſſadors into France, with proper inſtructions upon this head; that ſome meaſures might be taken with Henry, for affording them neceſſary protection and ſupport. Sir Robert Cecile, Secretary to the Queen, and John Herbert, her Maſter of Requeſts, were, accordingly, commiſſioned by her Majeſty, for this purpoſe. Upon their arrival on the continent, they were joined by Juſtin Naſſau, and John Barnevelt, the envoys appointed by the States, to repreſent their ſituation, and their claims, to the King of France.

March.

No ſooner did Henry prepare a body of troops to march into Brittany, than every ſupport of the Duke of Mercoeur's confidence began to fail him †. The Lords of his party, diſtruſting, alike, his reſolution, and his integrity, intreated the King's pardon, and ſollicited compoſitions for themſelves. Amneſties granted to them, which their many robberies and cruelties rendered them unworthy of, increaſed their ſubmiſſions. The towns threw off the yoke of their petty tyrants; and Henry had ſcarce approached the borders

 of

* Cambden, ibid. p. 504. † D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 29. De Serres.

Book III. 1598.

of the province, when he found his way opened to the capital. While at Nantes, the Duke of Mercoeur trembled with apprehenſions of his ruin; the addreſs, and ſupplication of his Dutcheſs, aſſiſted by the Marchioneſs de Monceaux, procured him a deliverance, of which he deſpaired. At Angers, thoſe ladies having conferred together, framed a propoſal to Henry, which diſarmed all his indignation *. It was the marriage of his ſon Caeſar, by the Marchioneſs, to the Dutcheſs of Mercoeur's only daughter, the heireſs of a moſt opulent eſtate. The King had no power to reſiſt the intreaties of his miſtreſs, in behalf of her ſon; and the humiliation of his enemies was, generally, with Henry, the greateſt ſtep to his reconcilement with them. Mercoeur obtained a capitulation, with emoluments, to which he that had perſiſted ſo long in his revolt, was, by no means, entitled; and the King had the ſatisfaction and credit of quickly reſtoring peace, and eſtabliſhing his authority in a province, that had been, in a great meaſure, detached from the ſtate. The fair ſex knew the privilege which Henry's complaiſance gave them, in the buſineſs of interceſſions with him; and ſeveral of them uſed it ſucceſsfully at this time †. One of them, big with child, having rode with too much ſpeed, to plead for her huſband, who durſt not appear, was very near being delivered, upon throwing herſelf at his feet.

Duke of Mercoeur's compoſition with the King.

Whilſt Henry, beſides regulating the affairs of Brittany, attended to the framing the articles of the new general edict, in favour of the proteſtants, the envoys of England and Holland came to the court at Nantes. Their inſtructions to diſſuade him from concluding a peace with Spain, and to engage him to adhere to the offenſive league with them, were known, and the King was prepared for combating all their arguments ‡. But, inſtead of uſing ſuch defenſive

* Pereſixe, edit. oct. p. 255. † Thuan. ibid. p. 780. ‡ Mem. de Sully, ibid. Cambden, ibid.

defenſive reaſons as Queen Eliſabeth's faulty reſerve, in the laſt treaty, furniſhed him with, he confined himſelf to thoſe, ariſing from the diſtreſſed ſituation of his kingdom, and the obligation, ſuperior to all others, that lay upon him, as its juſt and tender ruler, to reſcue it, at length, from the rage and deſolations of war. The view he gave of the ſhock undergone by France, which had weakened all the powers of the ſtate, was ſtriking; and the concluſions he drew from it, were juſt and deciſive, upon the argument. As no Prince could be ſuppoſed to be bound to a perpetual war, or to decline making peace, with an enemy, upon reaſonable terms, the ambaſſadors had little to reply; and Sir Robert Cecile * declared that he had inſtructions to treat about a general peace. Here a ſtop of all procedure enſued, by the envoys of the States refuſing, utterly, to concur in this propoſition. To compenſate for this, they offered, if Henry would continue the war, to furniſh him with pay for ſeven thouſand foot, and to equip a fleet of twenty ſhips, to retake Calais. But, even this propoſal, alluring as it was, to one of Henry's martial ſpirit, did not influence him to prefer a war, which, whatever its fortune might be, threatened the growth of all diſorders in his kingdom. With all his military genius, and his taſte for the honours of the field, the events of the preſent war, he owned, had taught him †, that nothing required more mature and deliberate counſel, than the declaration of it. As to the point of honour with his allies, it is certain that Henry teſtified, perhaps, more regard to it, than the ambiguous and unequal conditions of the league with them, merited from him. Cambden owns ‡, after throwing together all the deſcants of the envoys on his deſertion of it, that every thing was done by him, in honour of Queen Eliſabeth; whom he wiſhed to include in the peace with Spain. He obliged the Spaniſh commiſſioners, at Vervins, to promiſe, that powers

Henry anſwers the objections of the Engliſh and Dutch envoys, to the treaty with Spain.

* Cambden, ibid. p. 547. † Mem. de Sully, liv. 8. ‡ Ibid. p. 549.

Book III. powers ſhould be obtained by them, for treating with her, if ſhe ſhowed any inclination to peace *. And, what was more material, he agreed to make ſtated acquittances of the debts he owed to Eliſabeth, and to the States; that, in caſe of the continuance of their war with Spain, the latter might not want a pecuniary fund, to enable them to ſupport the burden of it.

1598.

The diſputes about precedency, in the congreſs at Vervins, and other formalities, being adjuſted; the articles of the peace itſelf were, without much difficulty, agreed upon. Philip's acceptance of them teſtified the grievous curb put upon his boundleſs luſt of empire †. His renunciation of all his late conqueſts, on the French frontiers, and of every place he had ſeized, in the territories of France, conſtituted the moſt material part of the treaty. Henry, though bound to make a like reſtitution, had only the county of Charolois to reſign. Cambray was acknowledged to be a free or neutral city, under the juriſdiction of its Archbiſhop. The chief difficulty that aroſe, reſpected the Duke of Savoy being comprehended as a party in the peace; without any ſtipulation for his reſtoring to France the marquiſate of Saluſſes. But, to avoid a diſcuſſion that might have created a miſunderſtanding between the principal parties, it was agreed, that the controverted affair of the marquiſate ſhould be ſubmitted to the Pope's arbitration; who ſhould determine, finally, with reſpect to it, within a year. With joy, Henry ſigned, at Paris, the treaty of peace, with Spain; in which, on account of the recovery of all the conquered places, he juſtly ſaid, "That he had performed, by one ſtroke of his pen, as much as a long war, with the beſt ſwords of his kingdom, could have accompliſhed." The ratification, and execution of the articles of the peace, on the part of the Catholic King, being punctually com-

Articles of the treaty of Vervins. May 2.

July 3.

* Thuan. lib. 120. p. 782. Mem. de Sully, liv. 9. † D'Aubigné, liv. 5. chap. 4. De Serres, ibid. D'Avila, liv. 15. Henault, p. 382.

completed, Henry ſaw his labours, for reſtoring the tranquility of France, and eſtabliſhing the former honour of her ſtate, crowned with ſignal ſucceſs. 1598.

The celebrated peace of Vervins, was, juſtly, reckoned the firſt blow given to the exorbitant power and pride of the houſe of Auſtria. One motive that led Philip II. to it produced, alſo, the diſmembering of the Low Countries, of Franche Comté, and the Charolois, from the monarchy of Spain *. Such a dowry given away from the heir of the crown, to a daughter, was a very extraordinary phaenomenon; and ſhowed that Philip, now ſinking under his infirmities, had quitted his dream of univerſal empire. Conſidered as a political expedient by him, to engage the provinces of the Netherlands to union under a ſovereign of their own, it had ſome face of plauſibility, but it was too late of being tried, to produce a conſiderable effect †. Even this view of it was, in a great meaſure, annihilated, by the ſecret clauſes added to the grant; about the excluſion of the ſubjects of the Flemiſh ſovereignty, from all trade to the Eaſt or Weſt Indies; and, by a bigotted requiſition, for the Archduke Albert, and the Infanta his ſpouſe, and all their ſucceſſors, to perſevere in the catholic faith, and to maintain it, without toleration of hereticks. While the Archduke of Auſtria depoſited his Cardinal's hat, and purple veſtments, in the church of Halle, near Bruſſelles, and ſet out for Spain, to embrace his new ſecular dignity, together with his ſpouſe; Philip II. ‡ reſigned all his earthly concerns, and his place, on the ſtage of time. No monarch, before him, in Europe, had ground to flatter himſelf, in the receſs of his cabinet, with the hopes of attaining a general ſway, or dominion, over its other potentates. It was believed to be a ſcheme fit to be entertained, only, by ſome military hero or conqueror, like Charlemagne; and Philip's

Reflections upon the terms of of peace.

Death of Philip II Septem. 13.

* Thuan. lib. 120. p. 792. † Ibid. liv. 121. p. 805. Mem. de Sully. liv. 10. ‡ Thuan. lib. 120. p. 790. D'Aubigné, liv. 4. chap. 28. Ibid. liv. 5. chap. 18.

1598.

View of his ambition, and political conduct.

lip's father, Charles V. had aſpired to it, altogether upon this laborious plan; and found his perſonal purſuit of it, through battles, ſieges, and the duſt of the field, too hard, and ſevere, for his conſtitution and ſpirits. With his millions of gold, from the Indies, and the advantage he thought might be taken of the diviſions and civil broils of other ſtates, Philip II. was the firſt European Prince who thought it practicable for him, without ever appearing at the head of an army, to reduce under his ſubjection, or to give the law to the moſt powerful neighbouring ſtates. Beſide failing in this project, and proving only a temporary ſcourge, or an incendiary, to other ſtates, it was obſerved that he loſt, of his father's poſſeſſions, Gullette, and the kingdom of Tunis, in Africa, and the half of the provinces of the Netherlands; and ſuffered the coaſt towns of Spain to be aſſaulted, and Cadiz to be taken by the Engliſh. Portugal was the only permanent acquiſition he made. So often diſappointed are the deſigns of the moſt artful and inſidious uſurpers upon the rights of mankind, as well as of the open and audacious invaders of them!

To ſubjoin the particulars of Philip's death, after long and ſevere agonies, and of his ſpeeches and behaviour to his children and miniſters, upon the certain approach of his exit, would only be entertaining to one claſs of readers. The piece called his latter will, or the codicil to his teſtament, of which Sully * furniſhes the extracts, with his reflections upon them, is, juſtly, obſerved by his annotator, to have been a ſpurious copy of that monarch's inſtructions to the heir of his crown †. De Thou informs us, that there were various pieces, under the title of private memoirs left by him, which were publiſhed at that time; and it is evident, from a compariſon of the hiſtorian's extract of his will, with that given by Sully, that probability

* Mem. liv. 10. † Ibid. p. 794.

bility altogether favours the former of them. It is not likely that Philip II. died ſo great a political penitent, as Sully's account repreſents him to have been. The chief article of remorſe, which De Thou aſcribes to him, was, what may be termed, a *hereditary* one, relative to an inquiry about the right of Spain to the kingdom of Navarre. Ferdinand, and Iſabella, the firſt uſurpers, had left it, as a caſe of conſcience, upon Charles V. The Emperor tranſmitted it to his ſon, and Philip devoutly recommended the diſcuſſion of the point to his heir. Such was the dying penitence of thoſe Princes; the champions, too, of that church, which holds reſtitution to be indiſpenſibly neceſſary, where the power of it remains! Philip III. who ſucceeded to the crown of Spain, was of an age too unripe to judge of the propriety of his father's political teſtament, or to form ſchemes of his own for the diſturbance of Europe. He was ſoon married to the Emperor's niece, the Archdutcheſs of Gratz. The ceſſion of the Low Country provinces, to his ſiſter, and her ſpouſe, was confirmed by him. But, before the Archduke Albert returned from Spain, to aſſume his new ſovereignty, the war with the States of Holland, which he endeavoured to ſuſpend, by pacific letters and propoſals to them, was recommenced, under his Lieutenant General, the Admiral of Arragon.

Political teſtament of Philip II.

Before Henry IV. ſigned the peace of Vervins, he had affixed his ſeal to the edict of Nantes; the famous charter of the toleration and privileges of the proteſtants, in the kingdom. No act of his government was more important, nor ſhowed more his ardent diſpoſition to acquit himſelf of what fundamental equity, honour, humanity, and gratitude, demanded from him. It became him, who was the reſtorer of the peace of France, after almoſt forty years of civil diſcord, to controul that illiberal, bigoted, and barbarous ſpirit, which had kindled and extended the pernicious and laſting flame. It had been the reproach and infamy of a people, civilized

and poliſhed, by the improvement of their laws and manners, literature, and arts, beyond moſt of their neighbours; that they could not endure a part of their fellow citizens, differing from them in ſome points of religion, without horror, and mortal rage. The honour of Henry's reign, as well as the proſperity of France, required the abolition of this glaring character of barbariſm. While it ſubſiſted, a pretence for civil inſurrections could never be wanting; and the King had known too much of the incendiary ſpirit of the league, not to deſire, and to endeavour, as much as was poſſible for him, to repreſs it. Sully obſerves, that, with all the habitual command he had of his temper, the very mention of its deteſtable name would, ſome times, ſtrike forth, in his features, the manifeſt ſigns of his warmeſt indignation and reſentment. As Henry felt and thought upon this ſubject, ſo did many of the conſiderate catholicks of his kingdom. By ſome of the wiſeſt of them, he was adviſed and directed in the framing of this new bond of reconciliation, and concord, between the two parties, in the nation; which difference in religion, and rooted faction, had thrown into long enmity. De Thou, and Schomberg, were the principal compoſers of the articles of the edict of Nantes. Calignon, who was a proteſtant, and, as ſome hiſtorians affirm, Chamier, a famous miniſter of that religion, contributed their labours to it *. To render it as perfect as poſſible, and to give it all the perſpicuity and preciſion, neceſſary to a permanent eſtabliſhment; almoſt two years were employed by them, in ſettling its various articles. The Cardinal Legate was acquainted, by De Thou, with the moſt difficult of them; and the teſtimony the hiſtorian gives, to his candid judgment and behaviour, upon thoſe appeals to him, is ſuitable to the character that has been aſſigned him. Yet, all the caution and prudence uſed by the King,

Conceſſion of the famous edict of Nantes to the proteſtants.

* Thuan. in vita ſua, liv. 6. p. 93.

King, and the ſtudy and application of thoſe able and induſtrious commiſſioners, could not prevent ſome overſights being committed, in ſo delicate and complex a buſineſs; nor hinder a clamour being raiſed, by the jealous and violent, and ſome attempt to oppoſe the paſſing the edict, as it ſtood, into a formal law, before the court of parliament. From juſt reſpect to the Cardinal Legate, this promulgation of it was deferred, till his departure out of the kingdom. It was unworthy of the annotator on Sully's * memoirs, as it appears to be abſurd and unjuſt, to ſpeak of the edict of Nantes as partly extorted from the King, by the apprehenſion of the proteſtant aſſemblies that were held during the ſiege of Amiens.

To give an abſtract of an edict, ſo explicit and comprehenſive as that of Nantes, would be tedious and unentertaining. It † conſiſted of no leſs than ninety-two articles, beſides a number of others, that were not, for ſome time, promulgated. It was the general code of law, which preſcribed the privileges of the toleration, granted to the proteſtants in France, and regulated the civil controverſies between the catholicks and them, in a manner more preciſe, and diſtinct, than had been formerly done, by the edicts of Poictiers and Flex, upon which it was founded. It may only be neceſſary to obſerve, that it put the proteſtants in poſſeſſion of all the natural and juſt rights of citizens. They were declared capable of all public offices and employments; and of having the benefit of the colleges and ſchools, for inſtruction, and of the public hoſpitals, for the relief of their poor and ſick ‡. For the more impartial adminiſtration of juſtice to them, a chamber, called, afterwards, that *of the edict*, compoſed of an equal number of catholic and proteſtant judges, was inſtituted in all the courts of parliament. They were permitted to hold aſſemblies of their deputies; only with the expreſs leave of his

Sketch of the articles of the edict.

 Maje-

* Mem. liv. 9. p. 163. † D'Aubigné, liv. 5. chap. 20. De Serres, p. 922.
‡ Thuan. lib. 122. p. 859.

Book III. 1598.

Majeſty, and under the inſpection of commiſſioners, appointed by him. Other articles maintained the ſuperior privileges of the eſtabliſhed religion, and directed the decent deferences to it, that were exacted from the proteſtants. Amongſt the articles called ſecret ones, it was allowed to the latter, to retain, for eight years, ſome towns of ſurety, for the execution of the edict; and that the garriſons of them ſhould be paid by the King.

Political conſiderations, about its propriety and expediency.

Henry, to whom no labour for the public welfare was intimidating, entertained the noble and generous hope of vanquiſhing the ſpirit of religious diſcord by this pacific and ſalutary act of legiſlation. His predeceſſors, incapable of it, from bigotry, or weakneſs, had made no pacification with the proteſtants, but from neceſſity, and with a manifeſt view of evading its execution. Their procedure taught their catholic ſubjects to expect, always, the violent breach, or artificial diſſolution, of their public engagements to that body. Hence ſcenes of war, and treaties, without peace, had followed one another, in an endleſs courſe. Henry, beyond ſuſpicion, in point of honour, and faith, and with a heart, invincibly firm in his fixed purpoſes, ſhowed his chief, and great aim, in the equitable edict granted by him, to be the public peace; and he had reaſon to truſt that, ſupported by his authority, it would be ſubmitted to; and, gradually, become ſuch a cement of civil union and concord between the jarring parties, as was long unknown in the kingdom *. With this deſign, he took care to prevent or to ſuppreſs the murmurs and diſputes that might ariſe, upon the firſt ſteps to its execution; by ſending two delegates, one out of the order of the nobles, and another from the parliament, into every province of the kingdom; whoſe authority, or mediation, had great influence in producing that abatement of diſſenſion, and that reverence of public

* Thuan. ibid. p. 865.

public order, and the laws, which he knew to be eſſential to the national welfare.

1599.

At the time of the tranſmiſſion of the edict to the parliament of Paris, for regiſtration, which enſued in the month of February 1599; a great appearance of conteſt and oppoſition was raiſed againſt it *. The deputies of the clergy, who were aſſembled in the capital, the Sorbonne, and the parliament, found, each of them, ſome ſhadow of diſſatisfaction, and complaint, upon the intereſting ſubject. The firſt preſented the bill of their general grievances, to the King, prefaced with a petition for the publication of the council of Trent †. The third objected to the participation of all offices and civil employments, allowed by the edict to the proteſtants, and arraigned the inſtitution of the new chamber of judges, as an innovation, and a retrenchment of their authority; and the univerſity joined in the remonſtrance. The conceſſion made by one article to the proteſtants, to conveen their aſſemblies and ſynods, without authority from the King, and to admit foreign deputies into them, was a groſs error in the edict itſelf, which furniſhed a juſt handle of exception to it. Berthier, the Syndic of the clergy, having repreſented to the King, in preſence of the Duke of Bouillon, all the conſequences that might be apprehended from this licentious power, which the catholic church in France had never poſſeſſed, and, eſpecially, what a door it would open to domeſtic leagues, and aſſociations with foreigners; it was determined, immediately, by the King, that the article ſhould be ſtruck out, and the reſtricted one inſerted in its room ‡. In an aſſembly of the proteſtant chiefs, called together in Paris, upon the occaſion, the point was yielded, as diſagreeable to the ſenſe of the generality of their body, and the odium,

February.

Oppoſition raiſed to its regiſtration by the parliament;

which, after ſome amendments, is overcome.

* De Serres, ibid. Mem. de Sully, liv. 10. Pereſixe, ibid. p. 29. † D'Aubigné, liv. 5. chap. 2. ‡ Mem. de Sully, ibid.

Book III. 1599.

odium, both of its requiſition and defence, was appropriated to Bouillon and Tremouille. That of the conceſſion of the article was, with more malignity than juſtice, thrown upon Schomberg and De Thou, and expoſed thoſe reſpectable mediators of the peace of their country, to the virulent ſtigma of the clergy; whoſe obloquy againſt them, at this time, being handed down, the hiſtorical work of the latter, with more of the characters of truth, genius, and immortality, than any other production of the age, has not effaced it, in the minds of the prejudiced and malevolent. Thoſe who know as little of the laudable and admired character ſupported by De Thou, in the moſt factious and defamatory times, as they do of his elaborate work, are contented with the report made of him, by the catholic zealots, as a diſguiſed proteſtant. Have the moderate ever acted, as became them, in the ſcene of faction, or the unbiaſſed wrote their record of it, without ſome ſuch perſecution from party-rage and ſlander?

Henry's ſpirited replies to the remonſtrances about paſſing the edict.

After ſome other ſlight corrections were made by the King's council upon the edict, Henry prepared himſelf for hearing the harangues of the delegates, of the three remonſtrating bodies, againſt it. The replies that he gave to each of them are curious, and beſpoke that quick perception of every impropriety and hollow argument, that ſlipt from them; and that lively, but diſpaſſionate reprehenſion of impertinence, and affectation, which this Prince diſcovered in his ſpeeches, upon various occaſions. To the clergy he ſaid, "Exhortation is your province, and your great faculty. You have exerciſed it at large, and told me all my duty, without much conſidering what I have done, or what more I am able to do. I too, in my turn, could deal with you in admonition; but all my life has been action; and I underſtand, and chuſe only to be a preacher in this way." His anſwer to the counſellors of parliament had many ſtrokes of acuteneſs and vivacity; and concluded with a

beco-

becoming ſcorn of their intimated terror, of popular inſurrections, and of the anger of the court of Rome. "I know, ſaid he, that there have been barricades in Paris, and how theſe mighty battlements were raiſed. But I know, too, that they might have been prevented, or levelled, in a moment, to the ground. It would have been a diſpenſation, I looked not for, in my lot, to have aſſaulted no more formidable ramparts. But my enemies have reaſon to take care, not to erect ſuch mockeries of war againſt me. You, who ſpeak of the judgment of the Holy See upon the edict, know not that I ſtand, upon the footing of a king of France, with the Sovereign Pontiff, and in better terms with Clement VIII. than violent and rebellious catholicks can pretend to. Your arguments are only bugbears, or evaſions. I require the immediate regiſtration of my edict." The parliament, ſoon after, complied; and the King, with more facility than could be expected, and with a general acknowledgement of the prudence he had ſhown, accompliſhed the momentuous and ſignal tranſaction. February 25.

To extend the foreign peace he had made to the neighbouring powers, Henry ceaſed not to ſollicit, by his ambaſſadors, that a conference might be held, for terminating the hoſtilities between England and Spain. He propoſed the town of Boulogne, in his dominions, as a neutral and convenient place for it. After much interceſſion, he prevailed ſo far, that the commiſſioners of thoſe ſtates repaired thither, to treat of an accommodation. But ſuch was, ſtill *, the propenſity to diſſenſion between them, or the jealouſy of their courts of each other, that the diſputes which enſued about the precedency of place, and other titles of ceremony, proved ſufficient to prevent their entering upon the material articles of a treaty; and, after three months inſignificantly conſumed in theſe preliminaries, Conferences at Boulogne, between the envoys of Spain and England, broken off.

* Mem. de Sully, ibid. Camden, B. 4. p. 585.

BOOK III. 1599.

naries, the envoys broke up their conference, without any agreement.

Concluſion and review, of the general ſubject of the hiſtory.

In the hiſtory of France, now brought down to a remarkable period, we have viewed the moſt ſurpriſing and intereſting revolutions of that monarchy. The political, and the religious, the civil and the military conteſts, have been, in their turns, attentively ſurveyed, during a courſe of forty years. It has diſplayed ſcenes of actions, principles of parties in the ſtate, and characters of men, which the hiſtory of Europe preſents, in no other period. The fate of one of the principal kingdoms in Europe has been ſeen placed in a critical ſuſpenſe, and emerging, at laſt, after long and ſevere convulſions, into peace, and civil union. During its depreſſion, the dreaded domination of one European power, over the reſt, being heightened, an intereſting view of their ſituation, alſo, ariſes from the picture given of France. In ſeveral of them, the ſparks of the ſame civil combuſtion were, often, kindled; and the ruin of them, by the ſame means, and agents, was threatened. Beſides the obſervations made on theſe political phaenomena, the cauſes that co-operated to the reſtoration of the balance of Europe, and the deliverance of the French monarchy, from diſſolution, are ſingular and worthy of attention. Two Princes, appearing in that age, with ſuch heroic qualities, as are infuſed into human minds, when Providence intends ſome ſignal favour to mankind, proved the ſafety of Europe, from the ſcourge of a conqueror, and from the fetters of bigotry. The religion perſecuted in Europe, by the predominant one, became a check to the progreſs of civil and ſpiritual tyranny over the nations; and the execrated proteſtants, in France, opened the way to the advancement of Henry IV. to the throne.

Henry, in the trueſt ſenſe, was the reſtorer of the French monarchy. He had the peculiar merit, and felicity of vanquiſhing that

1599.

Characteriſtics of the genius and reign of Henry IV.

that offſpring of fanaticiſm, and bigotry, the *league*; and putting a period to the war about religion, in the kingdom; which had ſhed more blood, and created more deſolations, than thoſe of the Goths and Vandals, in any nation. By his wiſe and moderate rule of the extravagant ſpirit of the factions, and parties, engendered by it, the peace of France was, not only maintained during his reign, but a certain foundation was laid for extinguiſhing all the veſtiges of diſcord, and ſecuring the future tranquility of the nation, if his reign had not been fatally cut ſhort, and the ſtate thrown under a minority. As he roſe by his valour, above difficulties, which appeared impoſſible to be ſurmounted; ſo no Prince acted the heroic character, and appeared in that of a conqueror, in a manner ſo unobnoxious to any aſperſion on his honour, faith, and humanity. Theſe qualities were ſignally exemplified by him, both in war and in peace. His oblivion of obſtinate enmities, ſhown againſt him, and the compoſitions he made, for the ſake of the public peace, with his humbled opponents, were the nobleſt illuſtrations of his magnanimity, and benevolent ſpirit. Unhardened by the habits of war, his feelings for the public, and the nation in general, were always manifeſted. They were, indeed, more expanded, and ſeemed to abſorb the force of his military activity, when, by the termination of war, the care of the people, and the charge of the kingdom's peace, and proſperity, devolved upon him.

Further illuſtrations of them.

Henry's government of the French ſtate more reſembled that of the father of a great family *, than of a victorious and powerful monarch. His private determinations, and public acts, were framed upon this mild ſyſtem of adminiſtration. But the arrangements he had to make, and the vigilance, attention, and political prudence, neceſſary to them, far outſhine the narrowneſs of this idea. Tho'

* Pereſixe, ibid. p. 298. et 301.

Book III. 1599. Henry attempted not any general reformation of the laws of France, the great change he introduced into the ſyſtem of the public finances, one of the moſt nice and difficult operations in government, as well as other ordinances promulgated by him, entitle him to the reputation of a lawgiver, in the kingdom. When the amazing ſucceſs that crowned this attempt, and the vaſt national benefit, enſuing from it, are conſidered, perhaps it may be reckoned that more penetration, and accuracy of genius, were requiſite, to the happy accompliſhment of this reformation, than to that of the legal forms, and of the procedure of the courts of judicature. It is unjuſt, to aſcribe the whole, or even the principal merit of this, to Sully's capacity, and labours *; who owns, on various occaſions, his obligations, not to Henry's ſteady ſupport of him in the conduct of affairs, only, but to his judgment and advice, in the chief difficulties he encountered. If the miniſter's aſſiduity, and the exerciſe of his talents of calculation, were ſuperior to thoſe of the King, the views of the latter appear, from ſome conteſts between them, on the ſubject of commerce, to have been more enlarged; and the narrow conceits of the miniſter, were corrected by the more unbiaſſed and liberal ſentiments of his royal maſter.

The aſcendant gained over the moſt factious, and unruly chieftains, by dint of wiſe and ſteady adminiſtration only, the poiſe of the ſtate, by political ſagacity, and the ſubordination and dependence created, after the peace, became no leſs ſurpriſing evidences of Henry's extraordinary genius, for the government of a great kingdom. From the diſplay of the characters of the chief nobility, in the civil wars, Henry IV. had the advantage of knowing them more perfectly than, perhaps, any other Prince. In the pacific ſtate of ſociety, the paſſions, as well as many of the abilities, of men, are con-

* Mem. liv. 10.

concealed; but, in ſuch a laſting ſcene of activity, and conteſt, all their predominant diſpoſitions and faculties are thrown out, in full view. The uſe made, by Henry, of this knowledge, is evident from a variety of particulars, recorded by Sully, and other hiſtorians; and we may perceive the effect it produced in the government. This attention paid to the characters of the nobles, in the aſſignment of their offices, and employments, was equalled by that given to the meaſures of adminiſtration; which, though directed to a general reformation of abuſes, and the recovery and improvement of the revenues of the crown, were ſo conducted as to interfere, as little as poſſible, with the genius of the French nation. In conſequence of the illuſtrious character, as a Sovereign, which Henry thus ſupported, and of his adherence to one great plan, concerted with Sully, with reſpect to the finances; a moſt ſurpriſing alteration, in every department of the ſtate, to the advantage of the royalty, quickly took place. In the ſecond year after the peace of Vervins, the augmented power of the French ſtate was remarkably apparent. In a campaign of three months, Henry, with an army, furniſhed with ſuch a train of artillery, as he had never before brought into the field, and paid with a punctuality unknown to his troops, ſtripped the Duke of Savoy, of la Broſſe, and all that principality, from which he took his titular dignity. The reſtitution of the marquiſate of Saluſſes, injuriouſly taken from France, and perfidiouſly retained by the Duke, was, by this means, perfectly ſecured. But the proof this rapid conqueſt gave, of Henry's ability to turn his arms abroad, was a matter of the higheſt conſequence, to the preſervation of the general balance of Europe,

1599.

Political and civil improvements, conſequent to the peace of the kingdom.

1600.

Henry's chaſtiſement of the Duke of Savoy.

Such, in a few years, was the proſperous condition of France, that Henry IV. became the ſure ſtay of the neighbouring ſtates, which needed his ſupport, againſt the Houſe of Auſtria; and, in conjunction with Eliſabeth of England, the arbiter of the differen-

1601.

1601.

ces of Europe. It was then * that thoſe two Princes, heroically congenial in their political views and ſchemes, communicated to each other, that *grand project*, with reſpect to Europe in general; upon which both of them had hit, with an amazing conformity of ſentiment. This circumſtance will appear incredible to ſome, as the project itſelf is generally pronounced to have been an impracticable one, and altogether chimerical. But the glory of forming ſuch a ſcheme, which had no leſs an object than that of making wars to ceaſe in Europe, muſt remain, ever, in the records of ages, to immortalize the names of Henry and Eliſabeth; who are the only Princes that are known to have conſpired in a deſign, ſo exalted above the narrow policy of courts; and, in its contemplation, ſo humane and benevolent to one region of the globe. It may be added, that, if ever Europe was capable of being formed into *one great republic*, by the more equal diviſion of its ſtates; and being compoſed into a harmonious ſyſtem, by the due balance of them; that very aera, and period, was, from various circumſtances, marked out as the proper one for it; and that Henry, and Eliſabeth, were the Princes qualified, above all others, to have nobly attempted the execution; as they had formed the plan of the glorious enterpriſe.

The grand ſcheme formed between Henry and Queen Eliſabeth, for maintaining the perpetual peace of Europe.

Under the ſupport of England and France, the affairs of the States of Holland were advanced to a pitch of proſperity, that ſecured them ever after, from being ſhaken by the aſſaults of Spain. In the year 1600, their army, conſiſting of 14,000 infantry, and 3000 horſe, under the command of Count Maurice of Naſſau, fought the battle of Nieuport; and obtained a ſignal victory over the Archduke Albert's forces. The invaſion of the maritime towns, and harbours of Flanders, being laid open to them, by this ſucceſs, they prepared to make the entire conqueſt of them; when, to defeat this deſign,

Advancement of the States of Holland to grandeur, and perfect independency.

* Ibid. liv. 12.

deſign, the ſiege of Oſtend was undertaken by Albert. Its continuance for a courſe of three years, and its proving ſuch a theatre of exploits, as coſt the lives of a hundred and forty thouſand men, rendered it fatally memorable in Europe. The taking of it, was the laſt effort of Spain, to hinder the States of Holland, from eſtabliſhing the perfect freedom, and independent ſovereignty, of their republic; which was acknowledged by the Spaniards, in the famous truce of twelve years, which they made with the States, five years after that period.

Sketches of the ſubſequent hiſtory of France;

Inſtead of reciting the anecdotes of Henry's amorous attachment to his miſtreſs, now created Dutcheſs of Beaufort, and about her exit, by a ſudden death, from the ſcene, it may be proper, in connection with thoſe higher views of his character, and reign, to take notice of the diſſolution of his marriage with Margaret of Valois; and of his having eſpouſed Mary of Medicis, daughter to the grand Duke of Florence: An event, which relieved his kingdom from the general fear of domeſtic confuſion, and conteſts, about the ſucceſſion, in caſe of his death. The birth of an heir of his crown, and ſeveral other children, having removed this apprehenſion, he was the more encouraged, and animated, by this felicity of his ſituation, to proſecute his great views, in which the fortune of all Europe was involved. If we, again, extend our ſurvey to the improvements made by him, in the political oeconomy of France; the progreſs of them muſt be owned to have been ſurpriſingly rapid. From being the moſt exhauſted, and diſtreſſed kingdom, in Europe, ſhe roſe to an almoſt incredible pitch of opulence, in a courſe of ſix or ſeven years: A noble, and encouraging example of what may be accompliſhed, for a nation's benefit, by a Prince, poſſeſſed of the patriotic ſentiments of Henry IV. and miniſters, capable of emulalating the integrity, ſteadineſs, and indefatigable induſtry of Sully! After Queen Eliſabeth's death, Henry ſtill perſiſted in the ſcheme con-

BOOK III.

1609.

concerted with her, and found his treaſures, and the internal force of his kingdom, ſo augmented, as put him in the full capacity of proceeding to execute it. When the expected event of the death of the Duke of Cleves, which led to the commencement of this enterpriſe, enſued *; there were amaſſed, in the Baſtile, thirty millions of livres, free of all demands of government upon it; and it was practicable, without ſtraining the credit of the ſtate, or creating diſtreſs to the people, to have raiſed more than double that vaſt ſum. In the arſenal, the ſtore of cannon, and other artillery, was prodigious; and the number of the troops could not be computed at leſs than eighty thouſand men. But the ſcene of Henry's life, and reign, rendered ſo illuſtrious, beneficial, and memorable, in Europe, was cloſed, in a ſudden, and fatal manner; when he was on the point of beginning an enterpriſe, which, perhaps, exceeded the boundary ſet to human policy. In his barbarous aſſaſſination, by the execrable enthuſiaſt, Ravillac, Providence ſeemed to teſtify to mankind, that no crime was too horrid to be committed by the votaries of fanaticiſm; nor any ſhock, a ſtate could feel, that might not be expected, from the remainder of its rage, in a nation. * *

till the fatal death of Henry IV. 1610, May 14.

* * * * * * * *

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 27. Henault. p. 391.

SUPPLE-

SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

SKETCH given of the Reign of HENRY IV. from the 1599, after the Peace of Vervins, to his Death.

WITHOUT attempting a formal diſſertation upon the ſyſtem of the finances, or entering into the regular narrative of domeſtic and foreign events, in the latter period of Henry's reign; we ſhall endeavour, in this Supplement, to comprehend ſuch an account of the moſt material reformations, and improvements made by him, in the laws, cuſtoms, and commerce, of the ſtate; as, joined with the explication of his *great deſign*, may, in ſome meaſure, complete the illuſtration of it.

It was the ſingular felicity of France, that Henry, crowned with ſo much honour as a warrior, diſcovered an extenſive genius for legiſlation, political oeconomy, and the advancement of the uſeful arts, in his kingdom. Under great defects, in every branch of government, the embroiled ſtate had laboured, for a courſe of forty years; and the ruſt contracted by the civil wars appeared, ſtill, to harden the nation againſt civil improvements. Upon a ſurvey of the kingdom, every place ſhowed deſolation, waſte, and deformity. Not * only was the face of cultivation, and popular induſtry, every where

Deſolate ſtate of France.

* Pereſixe, Hiſt. de Henry le grand, troiſieme par. p. 95. Mem. de Sully, liv. 10.

where obſcured; but the high-ways could ſcarcely be traced; the bridges over many rivers were broken down; and the public edifices reduced to ruins; while the funds, and impoſts, for the repairing of them, had been generally preyed upon, and exhauſted. The incumbered ſtate of the King's revenue, and the vaſt debts of the crown, excluded the proſpect of relief, or aid, to the public diſtreſs; which ſeemed to ſink the nation, though extricated from inteſtine war, into an incapacity of aſſuming the advantages of tranquility and peace.

Unreſtrained by this unhopeful aſpect of the public affairs, Henry waited not for the ſlow hand of time to work a change; but, with that impulſe, which great minds feel in their enterpriſes, he bent his thoughts, and induſtry, immediately after the peace with Spain, to promote it. He began with reviving, among the ſeveral orders of the ſtate, the almoſt forgotten ideas of domeſtic attention, and peaceful employment. He got memorials, about facilitating the intercourſe of cities and provinces, tranſmitted to him from the chief places of trade *. He ordered the principal rivers of the kingdom to be ſurveyed, and the tolls upon them raiſed to extortion, or made the ſubject of conteſt, to be ſettled to the advantage of commerce. To lead his ſubjects, by example, to occupations ſuitable to the public tranquility, he undertook the repairs of ſeveral public buildings; ſome of which, in St Germain-en-laye, ſoon began to make a ſplendid appearance. When, along with theſe ſpecimens of induſtry, and taſte, in their Prince, the people found the cauſeways reſtored; the navigation of the rivers freed from impoſitions, and ſeveral bridges re-built; all ranks were inclined to apply themſelves to uſeful labours, upon their deſolated houſes, and eſtates. The neceſſitous found, in honeſt toils, their daily ſuſtenance;

Henry's endeavours for its recovery.

* Ibid. de Serres, contin. fol. edit. p. 1074.

nance; and the idle and diſſolute among the populace, became obnoxious to the rigour of the penal laws*. As efforts of revived induſtry were made, with ſome emulation, among thoſe of higher rank; the kingdom, that had reſembled a deſart, gradually diſcovered the marks of culture, and application to the beneficial and laudable arts.

In a nation, accuſtomed to domeſtic feuds, it was not enough to preſent the attractive view of the arts of peace, and to rely on the ordinary motives, for the progreſs of them. A martial nobility, ſuch as that of France, required to have their ſwords chained to peace; and to be made ſenſible, that the laws, and not themſelves, muſt decide their quarrels. Upon this ſubject, two edicts were publiſhed by Henry IV. One † prohibiting the uſe of fire-arms, and the wearing of ſwords, by thoſe who had no title to this diſtinction; and the other, againſt duels. The latter was the great ſubject of diſputation and clamour; eſpecially, when, by ſome additions made to the law, the duelliſts, the bearer of a challenge, and the ſeconds, were condemned in penalties equal to thoſe of high-treaſon. Upon the one hand, the prevalence of this flagrant inſult on all civil government, and the ſhocking exceſs to which the barbarous cuſtom was carried, ſeemed to demand the ſevereſt curb of the laws. It was impoſſible, with any regard to order, or peace, in the ſtate, that theſe could be ſilent; when complaints came from all parts of the kingdom, about the rage, and pernicious effects, of duels; and when, in the courſe of a few years, they ‡ computed the number of the ſlain to ſome thouſands. On the other ſide, an abuſe, which originated from the Gothic law, permitting ſingle combats; which ſupported itſelf from the point of honour, congenial with the principles of monarchy, and which made perſonal

His edicts for the preſervation of peace;

a ſevere one againſt duels.

* Ibid. † Thuan. lib. 120. p. 787. et lib. 129. p. 1036. De Serres, ibid. p. 1023. et 1157. ‡ Pereſixe, ibid. p. 8. et 16.

valour the characteriſtic of the nobleſſe, as the beſt ſoldiers of the ſtate: Such an abuſe, rivetted by the tyranny of cuſtom, and the wrong biaſs of national manners, could not be extirpated, but by a moſt rigid law, and the ſtricteſt exerciſe of it, againſt all offenders. The nobles, and gentry of the kingdom, having ſuch an excuſe to plead, and being unwilling to quit this *feudal* method of revenging themſelves, inſiſted upon it, eagerly, as the privilege of their rank in the ſtate. To qualify the prohibition, in ſome meaſure, it was made part of the edict, that the Marſhals of France ſhould take cognizance of affronts, and indignities offered to men of honour, and determine the ſatisfaction due for them; and the parties were required to ſubmit to their deciſions. But, though this regulation appeared a plauſible one, for preventing duels, and the Marſhals of France actually formed a court for that purpoſe; the Gothic notion of honour was found too wild and extravagant, to be controuled by any political law or ſtatute. Neither then, nor afterwards, were the deciſions of this court of honour regarded.

Henry fails to enforce it.

Henry IV. on account of his fame for perſonal valour, and a high ſenſe of honour, was the fitteſt ſovereign to promulgate ſuch a law againſt duels. Yet he failed in enforcing obedience to it, from his too great lenity to tranſgreſſors, as well as from the difficulties attending its execution, in the period of his reign. Since that time, no renewal of the legal penalties in France, nor any reſtraints that have been deviſed in other European ſtates, have proved ſufficient to aboliſh a practice, atrocious in itſelf, contrary to the religion and morality of the Chriſtian nations, and which, beſides being a violation of all civil authority and order, renders the unpremeditated indiſcretions, brawls, and miſunderſtandings of individuals, often no leſs fatal in their conſequences, than the perpetration of crimes.

As

As the point of honour could not be ſubjected to any rule of civil government; ſo, in France, and other nations, the idea of the noble rank of perſons and families, another favourite one among the Gothic tribes, proved difficult to be aſcertained. From the earlieſt period of the feudal times, many of the civil diſtinctions, and honours, ſoon became *territorial*. The perſonal and *official* dignities, were, generally, abſorbed in the latter. The antient twelve peerages of France were, all of them, annexed to certain *fiefs*; and * the acquiſition of lands, erected into a dukedom, a county, a barony, or a lordſhip, communicated the diſtinctive titles of a Duke, a Count, or a Baron, to the proprietors. The poſſeſſion of what was called a *fief-noble*, or, in the Engliſh feudal term, a *knight's-fee*, conſtituted the land-holder a gentleman. This territorial conveyance of rank, nobleſſe, or gentry, being more palpable and fixed, than that of antiquity of deſcent, or of a family-name, ſo far prevailed againſt the latter, that the Princes of the blood in France, not inveſted with peerages, were preceded in rank, at the King's coronation, by the ſpiritual and temporal peers of the kingdom. Upon the footing of the prior erection of his peerage only, the Duke of Guiſe, at the inaugurations of Francis II. and Charles IX. was allowed the precedency to the Duke of Monpenſier, a Prince of the blood, and a Peer †. The ordinance of Henry III. at the ſtates of Blois, 1576, which has been mentioned, changed this uſage, in favour of the blood-royal. Upon a ſimilar principle, the ſame Prince iſſued an edict, 1579, declaring the acquiſition of titles of honour, or nobleſſe, by the purchaſes of fiefs, of whatever value or denomination, irregular, and invalid; yet the cuſtom of France, over-ruled this ordinance. Beſides, what the poſſeſſion of lands, according to ancient cuſtom, was, by this edict, not permitted to convey; the letters-patent of the King himſelf,

Ordinances about noble rank or gentry;

* Henault. abbregé chron. oct. odit. p. 384.

† Ibid. p. 354. et 384.

and certain offices and employments under the crown, were ſtill allowed to beſtow. From feudal ideas, even the ſole profeſſion of arms, was generally underſtood to enable a *roturier*, or plebeian. All the *gens d' armes*, or the men who compoſed the ſtanding companies of ordonnance, had been, from their eſtabliſhment, in the reign of Charles VII. exempted from the taillie, and were held to be gentlemen. Every plebeian, who betook himſelf to the army, in the equipage of one of the *gens d' armes*, paſſed into the ſame rank. This varied idea of civil honour, or nobleſſe, and the different conſtitution of it, from the purchaſe of fiefs, from the military profeſſion, from offices of ſtate, and letters-patent by the King, took place, leſs or more, in all the feudal governments of Europe, as well as in France. But, in modern times, we are accuſtomed to overlook this complicated view of civil rank, and to conſider it as ever attached to family-blood, and to birth.

Henry's edict about nobleſſe.

In the reign of Henry IV. another regulation, beſides that of his predeceſſor, was found requiſite, upon the ſubject of noble rank. After the commencement * of the civil wars, in which arms had been borne, ſome time, at leaſt, by the generality of people, the military title to the rank of gentry appeared too common, and abſurd, to be ſuſtained. By a new edict, in the 1600, the profeſſion of arms was declared inſufficient, unleſs in certain circumſtances of military ſervice, to confer French nobility; and to obviate pretenſions to it, from the tumultuary ſoldiers of the civil wars, it was further ordained, that no claims of this kind previous to the year 1563, ſhould be regarded. Without this proviſional ſtatute, the plea of an acquired exemption from the taillies might have been inſiſted on, by ſuch numbers of people, as would have almoſt annihilated that branch of the revenue.

With

* Henault, ibid. Pereſixe, p. 10.

With theſe regulations of police, Henry knew it to be of the utmoſt importance, to join attention to the adminiſtration of public juſtice, by his courts of parliament. He often expreſſed the ſenſe he had of the dignity of the parliament of Paris, and his deſire for its ſupporting that honourable reputation for legal procedure, and equitable deciſions of cauſes, by which it had been long diſtinguiſhed in Europe. He went, ſome times, without its being known, to hear the pleadings at the bar, and the reaſoning of the counſellors, upon any nice or difficult queſtion *. After having entertained the Duke of Savoy, during his reſidence in Paris, with every ſpectacle which could contribute to his amuſement, he carried him to behold that of its ſupreme court; as one truly auguſt, and the nobleſt ornament of his kingdom. The firſt preſident, Achilles de Harlay, was advertiſed of this intended viſit; and a cauſe, both intereſting and ambiguous, was pitched upon, to anſwer the King's aim in it. Having often exhorted the preſidents of the court, to remove the general complaint about the delay of cauſes, and the great expences incurred by parties; Henry, at the time of Eaſter, 1602, delivered a particular charge to them upon this head. In conſequence of it, the counſellors of parliament met, and, after much reaſoning, a decree was iſſued by the court, requiring the advocates to mark down, at the end of every proceſs, the ſum charged by them for the whole, and that a particular certificate ſhould be given, under their hands, of the fees received by them, for pleading. This arret, intended only as a curb upon extortion, was impugned by the whole body of the lawyers; who declared it a high indignity, as well as an injury, to their profeſſion. When the court further ordained, that all who would not ſubmit to the regulation, ſhould give in their names to the regiſter, in order to their being excluded from the bar; a train of three hundred of them marched towards that office;

Henry's reſpect to the parliament of Paris.

An arret for reſtricting the fees of the lawyers.

* De Serres, p. 950. Thuan. lib. 128. p. 1015.

office; and declared that they would reſign their function, rather than the privilege and liberty belonging to it. The courſe of juſtice was interrupted for ſome weeks; and, while the advocates endeavoured to vindicate themſelves by writing, the inconvenience of contending with them was felt by the publick. At laſt, the King being acquainted with the confuſion raiſed in the capital, iſſued a mandate for the lawyers to reſume their pleadings, and, at the ſame time, to yield obedience to the ordinance of the States of Blois; upon which the arret of the parliament was founded. An appearance of compliance was at firſt ſhown by the advocates; but the ſalutary regulation, with reſpect to their fees, was ſoon allowed to fall into diſuſe.

Plan about the finances founded on oeconomy.

That Henry, and his miniſter Sully, in their ſchemes for improving the revenues of the crown, proceeded upon the juſt and liberal principles of national policy; was manifeſt from one of the firſt acts of government with reſpect to them *. When the debts of the crown were computed to three hundred millions of livres; a remiſſion of arrears, to the amount of twenty millions, over the kingdom, was granted for the year 1596, in commiſeration of the indigence, diſtreſs, and complicated ſufferings of the people. They laid their plan for diſcharging the incumbrances, and reſtoring the credit of the ſtate, upon oeconomy, and a wiſe management of the finances, before unknown in the kingdom. Having diſcovered the enormous extortion of one hundred and fifty millions endured by the people, inſtead of thirty millions of livres, payable to the ſtate; they reſolved to free the nation from it. On account of the public calamities, they reckoned upon little more for ſeveral years, than the one half of the laſt ſum, as the whole produce of the five great farms of the crown, and the impoſts. But to deliver theſe funds of the

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 9. et 10. Pereſixe, p. 9.

the ſtate, from the hands of ten thouſand harpies, from the manoeuvres of foreign bankers, from mortgages to all the placemen, and penſioners of the crown, and the many abuſes and villanies of the farmers, and receivers of the revenue, proved a very difficult enterpriſe *. Henry himſelf often ſhrunk back from it; while the clamours of theſe plunderers of the kingdom made him believe, in ſpite of all Sully's convincing demonſtrations, that he was committing injuſtice, and impoſing hardſhips upon the publick. Affected with the deſperate exclamations raiſed by them, and perſuaded that what was ſo generally blamed muſt be wrong; "Ah! my friend, ſaid he to his miniſter, what a raſh and iniquitous meaſure have you now purſued?" Sully had ſtruck at the root of the oppreſſion of the people, and of the rapine committed on the ſtate, by prohibiting, in his Majeſty's name, all creditors of the government, to interfere with the royal revenues, and ordering them to expect their payment at the exchequer.

How ſollicitous and vigilant this Prince was to obviate or appeaſe the diſcontents of the people, appeared remarkably, in the tax of the ſou in the livre †, laid on all commodities, except corn, expoſed to ſale within the walled towns. This impoſt, though granted by the aſſembly of the *notables*, 1596, had occaſioned ſedition, and open riots, in ſeveral places. In the Limoſin, and Guienne, the collectors of it had been aſſaulted and expelled. On this emergency, Henry gave a noble example of the proper exertion of legal authority, and of the tender feeling he had of the ſufferings of his ſubjects ‡. He went himſelf to Poictiers, heard the remonſtrances that were made by the deputies of the cities againſt the tax; and, by a ſpeech, animated with the genuine ſentiments of a patriotic Prince, he induced the delinquents to ſubmit to the decree of the ſtate.

Henry's ſollicitude to pacify the clamours of the people.

* Ibid. liv. 10. et 25. † Perefixe, p. 97. ‡ De Serres, p. 1022

ſtate. When he ſaw them overcome, by his declaring, "That he would have no gold waſhed with the tears of his people;" he quitted the impoſt, which he underſtood to be a vexatious one, for a ſmall ſubſidy; and, ſoon after, totally aboliſhed it. The enlarged views of national advantage entertained by Henry, were likewiſe diſcovered, by the reduction of the legal intereſt of money. It had been ſeldom lower than eight, and had often run to ten *per cent.* By a ſtatute equally beneficial to the proprietors of land, and the commercial claſs of people, it was fixed by him at ſix *. While the high intereſt was allowed, nothing but uſury, and its extortions, was ſtudied by the monied men. The landholders, who borrowed, were quickly undone. The trader, finding any ſtock of money a hard purchaſe, raiſed the price of his commodity. All improvements in commerce, as well as in agriculture, being reſtrained, the advantage of money, as an inſtrument of traffic, and the ſource of induſtry, and arts, was, in a manner, loſt to the kingdom. By lowering its intereſt, ſinews would be given to the ſtate, which it had not before; and the people, too averſe to trade and labour, be inſtigated to try the advantages of them.

Intereſt of money reduced.

All general elogiums, which repreſent Kings, or miniſters of ſtate, as models in every act of their political and civil adminiſtration, may juſtly be ſuſpected of fiction, and deluſive colours. The wiſeſt, and beſt of them, it muſt be acknowledged, are only comparatively ſuch; and that they merit the names of legiſlators, and patriots, when they ſurpaſs, in a ſignal degree, the light, the penetration, and the virtue of their age, and country. It need not, therefore, be concealed, nor reckoned a diminution of the fame of Henry IV. and of Sully, as reformers of the French ſtate, that they committed ſeveral errors, and miſtakes, in their ſchemes of policy. In an age,

Political errors of Henry and Sully.

* Perefixe, p. 93, De Serres, p. 1009.

age, defective in political experience, and civil cultivation, we may rather admire that they fell not into many more. When their attention and views were extended to every object of government, to the trade, manufactures, arts, finances, and coin of the kingdom; it was impoſſible to avoid the admiſſion of ſome erroneous principles, upon theſe various and intricate branches of policy; which, after better opportunities, and longer time, for forming concluſions, are, at this day, the ſubjects of ambiguous ſpeculation and diſpute. It muſt be allowed, then, that the decrees, for ſtopping the currency of all foreign ſpecie *, but that of Spain, for raiſing the value of the French gold and ſilver coin, in order to prevent its exportation, and for prohibiting the wear and uſe of ſtuffs wrought or embroidered with gold, as foreign and extravagant ſuperfluities, were either unpolitical, hazardous, or impracticable regulations.. To theſe erroneous edicts, we may add the prohibition of the export of corn, in order to prevent its ſcarcity within the kingdom; a political doctrine, which, though manifeſtly abſurd, is ſtill inſiſted upon by the vulgar and the prejudiced, in modern times †. It muſt be owned, however, that Sully, in his memoirs, ſpeaks only of ſetting bounds to the vaſt quantities of grain exported. The propoſed limitations of the ordinance are not mentioned by him; nor do other hiſtorians, often lame in their account of laws, help us to this information. But, as the conveyance of corn, and other commodities, from one province of France to another, was then much interrupted, and long after continued to be ſo, from the cuſtoms peculiar to each province; we may certainly conclude, that no exceſs of exportation, to which the kingdom was liable, could be ſo hurtful as the prohibition of it.

* De Serres, ibid. Pereſixe, p. 91. † Liv. 10.

Miſtakes about foreign and domeſtic coin.

The offence taken by Sully, at the too great flux of foreign *ſpecie* into France, appears extraordinary *, and unintelligible, upon any principles about the balance of trade. He alledges, that the domeſtic currency was confounded with it; and yet, when the circulation of all, but that of Spain, was prohibited by an edict, the commerce of France, as Matthieu relates, ſunk to the loweſt ebb. In tracing the apparent ground or inducement to this injudicious decree, we may conſider it as connected with another proviſion, made at the ſame time, againſt the exporting of the French gold and ſilver coin out of the kingdom. Perefixe affirms †, that the money of France was carried, not only in the way of traffic, but as bullion, into Italy, Germany, and Switzerland, and recoined by the petty Princes in theſe countries, with conſiderable alloy ‡. Henry, and Sully, preſuming that there could be no other cauſe for the export of the coin, but that it paſſed for more in other ſtates, raiſed its nominal value. The crown, called *écus d'or*, which was valued at ſixty ſols, was advanced to ſixty-five; and the other ſpecies in the ſame proportion. As ever happens in this caſe, the price of commodities being raiſed ſtill in a higher degree, complaints and remonſtrances were made by the courts of parliament, and other ranks of people, againſt this dangerous ordinance; which, in any ſhape, could not fail to give a ſhock to the commerce, credit, and pecuniary tranſactions of the nation. The change of the public computation, by crowns, into that by livres, alſo appointed at this time, would add to the confuſion about the variation of the currency; though the latter method appears to have had its convenience, from being afterwards continued in the kingdom.

Among other civil eſtabliſhments which occaſioned complaints, that of the *droit annuel*, or the *Paulette*, as it was called, from the name

* Mem. liv. 12. † Ibid. p. 91. ‡ Mem. de Sully, liv. 13.

name of the firſt farmer of that impoſt, may deſerve particular mention. It was a pecuniary rate, or compoſition, demanded of the counſellors of parliament, the officers of juſtice, and thoſe of the exchequer, for the purchaſe of the ſurvivancy of their places, to their heirs *. As, from the time of Francis I. the venality of the public offices, and more eſpecially thoſe of judicature, had been often exclaimed againſt, as a reproach, and grievance to the nation; it appeared unworthy of the adminiſtration of Henry IV. to extend and perpetuate it by this new law. The King, however, conſidering what a large part of the revenue aroſe from the ſale of the offices, and ſenſible, that the ſollicitation of courtiers, and not the merit of the perſons recommended, was the cuſtomary and inevitable inducement for the ſupply of them; was of opinion, that the prejudice to the public was not ſo great, as to require him to renounce this ſupport to the many neceſſities of the crown. But, in eſtabliſhing the *Paulette*, Henry ſhowed that deliberative procedure, and reſerve, by which many of his civil regulations are marked, above thoſe of former reigns †. He inſerted clauſes in his edict, with reſpect to it, which, in the piece called the political teſtament of Cardinal Richelieu, are declared ſufficient to have prevented the only real inconveniencies, that might enſue from it. The exceſſive price to which the offices might be raiſed, being the principal one, he fixed it to only a ſixtieth part of their valued produce, to prevent their monopoly by the rich; and even reſerved to himſelf a power of repurchaſing any of them, upon a vacancy, for payment of the original price. He is not, therefore, chargeable with the enhanced valuation, nor with the ſubſequent multiplicity of the public offices, which became ſo general a ſubject of complaint in the kingdom.

Inſtitution of the *Paulette*, or *droit annuel*, by Henry.

* Thuan. lib. 131. p. 1135. Peref. p. 200. † Mem. de Sully, liv. 26. in the notes.

It is remarkable, that the ſale of the offices of juſtice, which ſeemed to infer the excluſion of men of abilities, and merit, from them, and their occupation by venal, unworthy, and intereſted intruders, was attended with no ſuch conſequence. On the contrary, no courts in Europe have been more famed for juridical knowledge, and, as far as ſome defects in the ſyſtem of their common law would admit, for uniform, and impartial diſpenſation of juſtice, than the chambers of the parliament of Paris, and many of the provincial ones. As if the circumſtance of the purchaſing their offices had rather contributed, in that monarchy, to give them more independent ideas; they have been, often, ſeen to act, in oppoſition to the arbitrary mandates of the court, with a ſpirit of freedom, and with a firm attachment to the conſtitutional laws of the kingdom, worthy of any ſenatorial body, celebrated in the annals, either of Greece, or of Rome. They have endured frequent exiles from Paris, and other cities, and expected, with heroic conſtancy, deprivation, and the loſs of their places, and fortunes. At this day, the arm of deſpotic power has been ſtretched forth againſt them, while its utmoſt efforts have failed, in making the deſired impreſſion, on the principles, and dignified characters, of many of theſe ſteady guardians of the antient laws and conſtitutions. By the expulſion of the greateſt part of the counſellors, from the parliament of Paris, and other provincial ſenates, and by their baniſhment into obſcure places, the court has ſuppreſſed their chambers; and erected, in their room, a ſpecies of judicial councils, whoſe pretenſions to privilege, or remonſtrances, need not be feared. The violent change of a branch of the government, ſo antient, and venerable, may, however, be followed with undeſireable conſequences. The ſubverſion of the parliament of Paris, which has been a conſiderable ſtay of the monarchy, and proved its ſafety in turbulent times, may be deeply felt, and regretted; during the weakneſs of a minority, or in any future conteſt among the Princes of the blood. In the mean time,

Honourable character maintained by the counſellors of parliament.

time, the inflexible reſolution and integrity of this perſecuted body of men, muſt be regarded as a rare phaenomenon, in our age. While the friends of the abſolute power of Kings, are ſatisfied, even with ſuch an inſtance of its exertion; many others will admire, and approve the eminent perſonal virtue, and the magnanimity of the ſufferers by it, in a public cauſe *. When, in the accounts of this tranſaction, we find the clerk-regiſter of the parliament, Mr de Voiſin, who had paid a million of livres for his place, and annually gained 100,000 by it, refuſing to reſume it in the new tribunal, and intreating the King to join him with the reſpectable exiles of the antient court of juſtice; it muſt be confeſſed, that ſcorn of corruption, and the dignity of acting upon principle, and character, cannot be ſhown in a more ſtriking light.

There can be no clearer proof of the wiſdom, and general equity of Henry's acts of government, than that the greateſt changes in the finances, and in many other departments of the ſtate, were effectuated, in the courſe of a few years, without any violent exertion of the ſovereign authority, or conſiderable diſguſt, on the part of the people. When alterations in the modes of adminiſtration, and temporary hardſhips, are peaceably ſubmitted to, by a ſpirited nation, accuſtomed to arms; political prudence, reſerve, moderation, and humanity, muſt be conſpicuous in the conduct and character of the head of the ſtate. This obſervation was fully verified in Henry's reign; when, though ſome turbulence and ſecret faction ſtill exiſted, a variety of defects, irregularities, and diſorders, in the government, underwent reformation. Every material decree, or arret iſſued by him, was not only ſubmitted to the mature deliberation of his council, but, in certain caſes, he required information and advice, from private perſons, capable of throwing proper light upon them.

Changes in the civil adminiſtration promoted without diſturbance.

* Annual regiſter, 1771, p. 91.

them. By this means, aware of the objections of intereſted parties, to any of his ordinances, he often replied to them, upon the ſpot, with forcible arguments.

Mild and generous principles of Henry's government.

As it was Henry's glory to have treated his enemies, when vanquiſhed in the field, with matchleſs clemency; ſo he made it the noble principle of his government, to overcome faction, and turbulence, by other methods, than thoſe of terror and ſevere juſtice. It appeared to be a general rule with him, to require of his nobles, when chargeable with plots, and intrigues, a ſincere confeſſion*, and acknowledgement of their guilt, and to accept of this atonement, properly made, inſtead of the legal puniſhment due to it. This uncommon ſentiment, and procedure, was agreeable to the favourite idea he had formed, of governing his kingdom, as a father does his family; who is not only reluctant to puniſh with ſeverity, but endeavours to turn offences that are committed, into peculiar motives, and obligations to duty and obedience. Beſide the amiable humanity of this idea, it may be affirmed, that there has been found, eſpecially in ſome ſtates, a political energy in it, ſuperior to all the acts of tyrannical ſway. Terror, and dread of ſanguinary puniſhments alone, while they make ſubjects, or ſlaves, to awful power, ever keep, or render them, ferocious and violent. Scarcely any European nation, without the influence of other principles of ſubmiſſion, has been thus formed into a regular and civilized ſtate. The times of deſpotic and bloody executions, hiſtory ſhows to have been thoſe of the moſt frequent inſurrections, and obſtinate rebellions. From the particular genius of the French nation, and the prevalence of ſome principles in it, with reſpect to the blood of the nobility, as devoted to the ſervice of the ſtate, in the field; political ſeverities, and the rigours of the laws

* Pereſixe, ibid. p. 102.

laws of treaſon, appear to have been, antiently, far leſs exerciſed, than in many other kingdoms of Europe. The principle of allegiance, and attachment to the King, has been happily cheriſhed, by other means, during a long courſe of time; and not barbarouſly forced, by ſuch a ſeries of condemnations of the factious nobles, to the ſcaffold, and the gibbet, as blot the annals, even of our Britiſh hiſtory. The ſparing of the blood of the French nobility, from the ſcaffolds, diſpoſed them to ſhed it, laviſhly, for the glory of their Princes; and to think leſs about civil ſecurities for their lives, and fortunes, than upon the principles of honour and clemency, adopted in their government. It may be added, that the memory of the capital trials, and horrid executions, to which the Engliſh nobles were, for a long period, ſubjected, made them afterwards contend for the amendment and mitigation of thoſe arbitrary laws of treaſon, by which their anceſtors had ſuffered.

The ferocious and turbulent ſpirit, raiſed in France, by the fanatical rage of the civil wars, Henry endeavoured to allay, by numberleſs examples of his clemency. By pardoning deſigns upon his perſon, and cabals againſt the ſtate, he appeared to wait, with too much patience, for the revival of the ſentiments of loyalty, and civil obedience, among a factious ſet of his nobles *. Finding, unhappily, by the Marſhal Biron's conſpiracy againſt him, that the higheſt recompences, and honours of his military ſervice, were inſufficient to bind this chieftain to his duty, he permitted, at laſt, the rigour of juſtice to have its courſe, againſt one of his quality and reputation. With what reluctance this was done by him, appeared, not only from his regretting †, in pathetic terms, the diſaffection of a man, whom he eſteemed, but by his making it known to him, that, though it was a repetition of his offence, an honeſt acknowledgement

Caſe of the Marſhal de Biron.

* Thuan. lib. 127. p. 1022. Sully, liv. 10. † De Serres, p. 1021

ledgement ſhould again purchaſe his pardon. The invitation, and opportunity, given him, for this behaviour, were diſregarded by this delinquent; who, adding inſolence and obſtinacy to his treaſon, inſiſted that he had nothing to confeſs, when the written proofs of his guilt were in the King's hands. "Adieu, Baron de Biron, ſaid Henry," ſenſibly affected with the obdurate temper, ſhown by him, at their conference. After all, there appears to have been an inſanity in this old Marſhal, which, if it had been attended to by Henry, might have excited pity, in contraſt to indignation; ſo far, at leaſt, as to have changed the capital ſentence of the parliament againſt him, into impriſonment for life. But, as often happens in ſuch caſes, this laſt determination, ſuitable to Henry's clemency, might have been attended with attempts for his deliverance, ſufficient to have endangered the peace of the kingdom.

Various public works carried on.

After the eſtabliſhment of order and oeconomy in the finances, and the confirmation of the general tranquility of the kingdom, all public affairs were caſt into ſome mould of improvement. Plans for the extenſion of commerce, or projects of uſeful works, were ſtudied and promoted. Hitherto the natural advantages of France, from her many great rivers, which invited to ſuch undertakings, had been totally neglected *. The conjunction of the Seine with the Loire, by the canal of Briare, was begun, and near three hundred thouſand crowns were expended upon it. Upon a more enlarged idea of commercial benefit, the deſign of connecting the navigation of the weſtern ocean, with the Mediterranean ſea, was entertained. The firſt project, left unfiniſhed by the ſhortneſs of Henry's reign, was accompliſhed in that of his ſon, Lewis. The other reſerved to the aera of Lewis XIV. was perfected by the canal of Languedoc; that wonderful effort of ſkill and induſtry, then unparallelled in any part of Europe. To encou-

rage

* Thuan. lib. 132. Sully, liv. 19.

rage both the uſeful and ornamental arts, which are the ſources of commerce *; Henry alſo eſtabliſhed various manufactures, in towns commodiouſly ſituated for them. Beſides thoſe of woollen ſtuffs, he invited the Flemiſh weavers of fine carpets, and of tapeſtry, to ſettle in Paris; and, with the advice and direction of ſome mercantile people, he ſet on foot the raiſing of white mulberry-trees, for the breed of worms, and the manufacture of ſilk; a commodity, which, being much uſed in France, carried, annually, ſome millions out of the kingdom.

The wide diſagreement of Henry and Sully, upon this laſt article of commerce, is remarkable. With ſufficient diſcernment of the benefit of trade, and the arts; the miniſter ſtill thought that the cultivation of them ſhould be, in a certain degree, circumſcribed; and that the wear of ſilk, as well as of gold lace, embroidery, jewels, and diamonds, ought to be retrenched, and prohibited by law, under the denomination of exceſſive luxury †. The arguments he uſed with Henry, upon this topic, will equally apply to the ſuppreſſion of all the ſofter trades, and employments, which miniſter to refinement in civil life. We find, accordingly, that, in the ſpirit of the *Spartan* law-giver, he is carried, upon his principles, to preſcribe ſumptuary laws, for equipage, furniture, and every conſiderable decoration of houſes, and tables. In this abſurd concluſion, all the reaſoning about limiting what are vaguely called the *materials* of luxury, will be found to terminate. Yet this political controverſy between Henry and Sully, has been often revived; and arguments, ſimilar to thoſe uſed by the latter, are ſtill inſiſted upon. In governments, where the object is to ſupport a military ſpirit among the people; ſome politicians condemn all thoſe arts, and occupations, which are reckoned to enervate the bodies of

Political diſpute about luxury.

men.

* Thuan. lib. 129. p. 1050. De Serres, p. 1096.

† Mem. liv. 16.

men. When the trade to both the Indies has been opened by the European nations, for more than two centuries, and a change of manners, almoſt equally diffuſed through them all; it is in vain, to think of laying reſtraints upon luxury; or that any particular ſtate among them can be exempted from its corrupting influence, unleſs by want of civilization, or by indigence, and ſuch other ſingular circumſtances.

Upon the ſame miſtaken principles, Sully intimates the diſapprobation expreſſed by him, with reſpect to an expedition, under the Sieur de Mont, for planting a colony in the American Canada *. In the ſtile of all the firſt adventurers in the new world, who had no other object but the diſcovery of mines of the precious metals, he ſignified his perſuaſion, that there were no *riches* to be found beyond the fortieth degree of latitude. Too much prejudiced upon this ſubject, he would not allow himſelf to conſider, that the natural commodities of ſome countries, and the increaſe of the materials of trade, were a more certain and valuable ſource of wealth, than the gold and ſilver mines of Peru and Mexico, ſo much coveted by every nation. To Henry's ſuperior penetration, therefore, we muſt aſcribe the particular diſcovery that was made, and the ſettlement that took place in Canada; which, afterwards, produced the trade of beaver ſkins, and furs, ſo profitable to France †. The beginning he, likewiſe, gave to the manufacture of glaſs-plates, and mirrours, and other curious commodities, ſoon enabled the French to vie with the richeſt merchandize of Venice and Italy, and ſecured a new fund of gain to the kingdom. It appears ‡, that he not only eſtabliſhed a council of commerce, but that a company was formed in his reign, for trading to the Eaſt Indies. Among other privileges and benefits granted to its members, it was declared, that gentle-

Expedition to Canada; and companies for trade and commerce.

* Ibid. Mem. Thuan. lib. 132. p. 1138. † Ibid. lib. 129. p. 1050.
‡ Mem. de Sully, ibid.

gentlemen, who joined with them, did not derogate from their rank.

The ſhare of natural genius, and taſte, which Henry himſelf poſſeſſed, diſpoſed him to encourage learned men, and to favour the improvements of literature. Beſide his engaging the famous Caſaubon, by a ſuitable proviſion for him, to reſide with his family in Paris; he * gave penſions to ſeveral perſons, eminent for ſcience, in Italy and Germany. It muſt be owned, however, that his liberality, among them, was not much celebrated; as he was naturally inclined to prefer the *Du Perrons* to the *Scaligers*, the men of wit and imagination, with ſome turn to political affairs, to thoſe fraught with erudition alone, and converſant merely with the ſcholaſtic fountains of knowledge. His deſign to erect ſeveral new foundations, in the univerſity of Paris, was known; and, by the propoſed education of three hundred gentlemen, in one particular college, it appears, that he meant to render the ſeminaries of literature more ſubſervient to purpoſes of civil and active life.

The riſe of many churches from their ruins, the finiſhing the *Pont-neuf*, over the Seine†, the imbelliſhment of Paris with the *Square-royal*, and of the Louvre, with magnificent galleries, and the foundation of the hoſpital of *St Lewis*, for incurables, and of that of the *Freres de la charité*, for maimed ſoldiers, now became ſignal monuments of the tranquility, public ſpirit, and ſplendor of Henry's reign. He rendered it yet more illuſtrious in the eyes of Europe, by his political management of foreign events, and by the ſingular abilities he ſhowed in maintaining peace, both at home and abroad. While the nations around expected, that he would

Public works, and hoſpitals.

avail

* Perefixe, p. 292.

† Ibid. p. 264. et 284.

avail himſelf of his military renown, and proſecute it by conqueſts; they found him no leſs ſollicitous, than capable, to preſerve an equal balance of power among them, and to adjuſt their diſſenſions, upon the moſt equitable plans. No monarch of that age, or of the paſt, attained like honour and fame, as a mediator of peace in Europe. To his reputation in political councils, he united a ſenſe of honour, which diſdained the impoſitions of craft, and artificial policy; and the known ſincerity of his declarations, ſeldom failed to enforce them.

Henry's fame as arbiter in the caſe of a diſpute betwixt the Pope and Venetians.

His interpoſition in the conteſt, which aroſe between the Pope and the Republic of Venice, and his ſucceſs, in bringing their intereſting debate to a ſpeedy concluſion, is, alone, a ſufficient teſtimony of his influence, in the quality of a mediator. It related to that antient ground of quarrel, which had kindled a flame in every nation of Europe, the exerciſe of the ſecular, and civil authority, in oppoſition to the ſpiritual and Papal juriſdiction *. The Venetian ſenate, which had formerly ſet bounds to the acquiſition of lands by the monkiſh orders, found it proper to prohibit, by a new decree, the endowing of churches or monaſteries, without licenſe from the government. All unauthoriſed purchaſes of real eſtates, by eccleſiaſtics, were ſubjected to confiſcation. Reſentful of this blow to the power, and wealth of the hierarchy, Paul V. annulled, by his brief, the law of the ſenate; and, unleſs it ſhould be inſtantly revoked, the republic was laid under his tremenduous excommunication. All the ſtates of Italy were alarmed at this rupture, and began to take ſides in the diſcord. The agents of Spain, ſecretly, inſtigated the animoſity of the parties; who, from vehement argumentation, proceeded to declare war. Henry's interpoſition extinguiſhed this flame, and ſo reconciled the two adverſe powers, as

* Thuan. lib. 137. p. 1252.

as to merit acknowledgements from both. "We are convinced, ſaid the Doge of Venice, to the French ambaſſador, that the King has equal fame in peace, and in war; and we deſire no better pledge of the tranquility of Europe, than his mediations."

The famous truce of twelve years, to which, in concert with the King of England, Henry got Spain, and the States of Holland, to agree, has been already mentioned. But, with reſpect to his motives, for diſengaging Spain from a ruinous war, it muſt be allowed, that they were altogether political, and ſuch as correſponded with his natural enmity to that power; which was regarded by him, as equally hoſtile to the reſt of Europe *. It evidently appears, from the accounts of the hiſtorians, that the weakened condition of both the contending parties, produced an inclination, in each of them, to a ſuſpenſion of arms; and, that, unleſs Henry had avowedly undertaken the defence of the States, they muſt have yielded to ſome treaty with Spain, ſeparate from his intervention. In this critical ſituation of his allies, the States, the conduct becoming him underwent a long diſcuſſion in his council; and, after various reſolutions, it ſeemed moſt eligible, to fall in with the ſcheme of a temporary ceſſation of hoſtilities, and to manage it, under his, and the King of England's mediation, to the beſt advantage for the United States. By this expedient, Henry, likewiſe, delivered himſelf from ſupporting a neceſſitous ally, whom he was obliged, conſtantly, to ſupply with money, and other ſecret aid; in a manner inconſiſtent with the treaty of Vervins; and which furniſhed ſome pretext to Spain for reviving her former intrigues within his own kingdom. As the two Archdukes were obliged to treat with the States, upon the footing of the independency of the latter; a political point was alſo attained, perhaps more diſadvantageous

Henry's political conduct in the truce betwixt Holland and Spain explained.

* Pereſixe, ibid. p. 182. Mem. de Sully, liv. 24. et. 25. Thuan. lib. 138. p. 1300.

tageous to Spain, than the continuation of the war might have proved. Thus it appears, that Henry's mediating in this truce, is no argument, though ſome hiſtorians would turn it into one, of his loſing ſight of the advancement of his great deſign, for the overthrow of the Auſtrian power.

General account of his foreign and domeſtic reputation.

In various reſpects, Henry's fame in political affairs, roſe to a high degree. In the conclave of Rome, his influence was ſeen to predominate over that of Spain, by the election of Alexander de Medicis, to the papal dignity; and, after his ſudden death, by that of Paul V. The States and Princes of Italy, generally, regarded him as their protector againſt the thraldom of Spain, and the imperial juriſdiction. By the correſpondence he held with ſeveral of the electors of Germany, a ſcheme was formed among them, for defeating the advancement of the Emperor's ſon, or of any of the Auſtrian family, to the throne of the empire *. It appears that James of Great Britain declared for this meaſure; which was believed to be ſo attainable, that ſome propoſition was made, in the French council, for Henry himſelf appearing among the candidates. At home, the flouriſhing, and happy condition of the kingdom, in general, demonſtrated the wiſdom, and beneficial efficacy of his adminiſtration. Here he was beheld to augment the revenues of the crown, without heavy impoſitions; to maintain a durable peace between his catholic and proteſtant ſubjects, as if all their former enmities had been obliterated by his edict; and to over-rule the remains of party-ſpirit, by circumſpection, addreſs, and temperate ſway; without his ſteady conduct of the helm of ſtate being perceived, but by the peaceful and ſerene aſpect of France, under his government. The aſſiduous exertions of generous ſtudy, and anxiety, by

* Mem. de Sully, liv. 21.

by Henry, and his miniſter, to infuſe new order, and reformation, into the departments of the ſtate, and the conſtitution of the monarchy itſelf, are further manifeſted, from the number of political memorials, under review between them; and from the pieces compiled by the latter *, for what was called the *cabinet* of policy, or the *inventory* of ſtate. Several of theſe being found in the King's repoſitory, ſerved, afterwards, as the beſt models for the police, and civil regulations of the kingdom.

While the King of France furniſhed ſuch ample ground for extolling him, as a ſovereign, and admiring his government, the amazing increaſe of the wealth, and power of France, created jealouſy, and apprehenſion, to ſome foreign Princes. His collected treaſures, and his proviſion of all the ſtores, and engines of war, conſidered along with the military force of his kingdom, appeared ſuſpicious and alarming. It was not credible that a Prince of Henry's ſpirit, and abilities for the field, would reſt content with a pacific oſtentation of his grandeur, or think it requiſite, not only to fill his coffers with money, but to repleniſh his arſenal, and recruit his garriſons, in ſo uncommon a manner, only to maintain the peace of Vervins; which, after the death of Philip II. Spain ſeemed little diſpoſed to infringe. It was rather concluded, that this Prince was ſecretly bent on ſome great enterpriſe, worthy of his ambition, and his fame; and that, notwithſtanding his late mediation of peaceful treaties, he would ſoon commence a ſcene of action, that would involve the fate of kingdoms and empires.

Certain it was, that Henry, for ſome years paſt, had conceived what well might be called his *great deſign*; ſince it was of a nature, tendency, and extent, ſurpaſſing the principles, and conceptions of the Princes,

or

* Ibid. liv. 26.

or politicians, who had, for many ages before, appeared in the world. As has been already obſerved, it comprehended a vaſt * change in the political ſyſtem of the European ſtates. This project, communicated between Henry and Queen Eliſabeth of England, had not only been revolved by the former; but, after frequent reviews, and ſome amendments of its branches, various preparations were made by him, during the ſeaſon of peace, for attempting its execution. Not only were the ſinews of war, amaſſed by Henry, intended for this purpoſe; but the connexions he formed with ſeveral foreign princes, had a reference to it. Since a deſign, that would have appeared incredible, and imaginary, to moſt men, could not ſafely be diſcloſed, and the hope of ſucceſs depended on the enterpriſe being begun, before it was plainly declared, the ſecret of it was kept between Henry and his miniſter. The King of Great Britain, after Eliſabeth's death, was the only Prince, who, under an oath of ſecrecy, was made acquainted with it; as a private ſcheme formed by Sully, with the hope of engaging his maſter in it. Upon this account, the particular view of it, is only found in the laſt book of his Memoirs. Other hiſtorians, either mention it in a general way, with a few remarks; or have taken their abſtract, and their illuſtrations of it from him. The latter manner is imitated in the following explication. * * * * * *

* Pereſixe, ibid. p. 208.

EXPLI-

EXPLICATION

OF

HENRY'S great Deſign, for eſtabliſhing the Equilibrium of the Powers of Europe, and fixing them in a durable State of Peace.

FROM the fear, and hatred, of the overgrown power of the houſe of Auſtria, common to the other ſtates of Europe; it was preſumed, that a number of them, ſufficient to reduce it within proper limitations, might be engaged in a confederacy. Upon the ſucceſs of this league for the freedom of Europe, either by war, or compoſition with the general enemy; it was thought practicable to inſpire the victorious confederates with a reſolution to prevent all future uſurpations of any one power over the reſt; and it was believed that ſuch a concurrence in this deſign might be obtained, that a certain propoſed arrangement of ſeveral ſtates, both as to the forms of their government, and the extent of their territories, would be complied with; or compelled, by the majority, or ſuperior force, of the armed aſſociates. It was ſuppoſed, that, after this political poiſe of the kingdoms, and ſtates of Europe was formed, their particular diſſenſions, quarrels, and controverſies, with each other, might be terminated without war; by means of a ſtanding council of envoys, or delegates, from the different powers.

Hypotheſis about the deſign.

Upon theſe political preſumptions, ſuch a regular and connected plan was deviſed, for an equal balance of power, among the various

ſtates, as teſtified the genius, and profound reflections of its authors. Every circumſtance was attended to, that could render it compleat, and productive of the noble effect propoſed by it.

Branch of it reſpecting religion.

As there were three profeſſions of the Chriſtian faith, and worſhip, which had acquired a rooted eſtabliſhment in Europe; the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran or Proteſtant, and what was called the Reformed; it was propoſed, that each of them ſhould be maintained, without controverſy, in the general ſyſtem; with the neceſſary diſtinction, in every ſtate, betwixt the eſtabliſhed and the tolerated religion. Upon ſuch an amicable admiſſion of the three predominant profeſſions of Chriſtianity, not only a ceſſation of the inveterate wars they had occaſioned, muſt have taken place, but any other religious ſubdiviſions of its votaries could have been, more eaſily, obſerved in their firſt growth; and methods more effectual, than thoſe of violence, employed to diſcourage them, in every community.

Propriety of the political changes.

In the projected diviſion, and model of the ſtates, the preſervation of all the principal kingdoms, and ſettled governments of Europe, in their former condition, was, as much as poſſible, kept in view. No reductions were intended, unleſs where dominions, ſo exorbitant had been acquired, as to deſtroy the equilibrium, or diſtant unwieldy conqueſts were retained by an oppreſſive force, or governments were unfixed, or a number of petty ſtates perpetually claſhed with each other. Thus, while the power of the houſe of Auſtria was to undergo a great change in Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands, and in Hungria, Bohemia, and the adjacent countries; the kingdoms of Spain, France, Great Britain, Sweden, and Denmark, and all the electorates of the Empire, together with the republicks of Poland and Venice, would have continued without any innovations.

Accord-

General arrangement of the ſtates of Europe.

According to the plan, fifteen ſovereign principalities would have conſtituted the whole ſyſtem of Europe. To the four hereditary kingdoms in it, a fifth was to be added, under the revived title of that of Lombardy. The elective crowns were to be increaſed to ſix, by thoſe of Hungary and Bohemia being aſſimulated to the Papal, Imperial, Poliſh, and Daniſh diadems. Two additional republics were to be formed; one of them compoſed of the ſmall ſtates and ſeigniories of Italy, upon the plan of the Venetian commonwealth; and the other made up of the Low Country provinces, upon the model of the Swiſs cantons.

View of the equilibrium, and of the political tendency of ſeveral ſtates to it.

From the ſlighteſt ſurvey of this political arrangement of Europe, it is perceptible, that equality among the powers would have ſubſiſted in the greateſt perfection. The comparative ſize of the ſtates was ſo exactly proportioned, and even the modes of government ſo diſtributed, that each of them, whether kingdom or republick, was fitted to be a check upon the ambition, or power of another. It deſerves, no leſs, to be remarked, that thoſe ſtates, where the principal changes were meditated, appeared, all of them, except Italy, to be in a great meaſure prepared for the deſigned revolutions in them. This was, evidently, the caſe in the Belgic provinces; and much the ſame may be ſaid of Hungary, and Bohemia; where the nobles and the people as zealouſly contended for the liberty of electing their kings, as thoſe of the Low Countries were bent upon a republick. To facilitate the alterations in Italy, it was made part of the plan, to render the Pope a ſecular potentate, by annexing the kingdom of Naples to his eccleſiaſtical patrimony. This wiſe meaſure, together with the eſtabliſhment of the kingdom of Lombardy, in favour of the Duke of Savoy, was ſufficient to have forced the little Princes and republicks there, to conſult their ſafety, by complying with the required change.

With reſpect to Germany, the ſeat of the imperial power, the execution of the plan was favoured, by the conſtitutional laws of the empire. The free election of its head, particularly guarded by them, had been ſo far violated, that the ſupreme dignity was rendered in a manner hereditary to the Auſtrian houſe. Inſtead of this invaſion of their privileges, generally complained of by the Princes; it was propoſed, in the firſt place, to baffle all the efforts of that family to hold the Imperial diadem; and then, to eſtabliſh it, as a ſtanding law, for the future, that the Emperor ſhould not be choſen twice, ſucceſſively, out of the ſame houſe. The Emperor himſelf was to be diveſted of that injurious power, of acquiring fiefs by confiſcation, or reverſion, and be reſtricted to the emoluments of inveſtitures given by him. Upon the kingdom of Hungary, enlarged by the ſpoils of the Auſtrian Princes, the guard of the barrier of Europe, againſt the Turks, was to be thrown; and, ſince all the other powers were concerned in ſupporting it, each of the great hereditary and elective Princes was to have a ſuffrage in the choice of the King of Hungary, along with its clergy and nobility.

As, in place of its vaſt dominions, the houſe of Auſtria would have been reduced to the poſſeſſion of Spain alone; there was a compenſation allowed, by the ſcheme, to its Princes. To the crown of Spain, and them, all the diſcoveries and ſettlements they had already made in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, and other future ones that might be effectuated by them, in the unknown regions, were confirmed.

In the enumeration of the ſeveral ſtates, which compoſed the political body of Europe, no mention has been made of Ruſſia, or Muſcovy, for an evident reaſon. Theſe wild, and barbarous countries, then made no figure, but in the map of Europe; and were of

little

little more conſideration, in the political ſcale, than their neighbours, the Coſſacks, Tartars, and Turks. If the Ruſſian Czar ſhould refuſe to conform to the principles of religion, and policy, adopted in the general league; it was determined, that he ſhould be ranked with the Aſiatic and infidel nations, and be involved in the war, which was to be conſtantly maintained againſt the Ottoman Emperor, and his dependents. It was one object of the political plan, that the wars of the European Princes ſhould be diverted into this channel. In it, the requiſite exerciſe to their martial genius was to be given. The quotas to be furniſhed, by each of them, for the general armament, would have become a military ſchool to every ſtate; and the wars with the infidels, that once depopulated Europe, would have only preſerved the military valour of her nations, and contributed to her internal peace.

Diverſion of the wars among the Chriſtian Princes,

The Chriſtian powers, engaged in the union, by this well contrived plan, would have aſſumed the appearance of one *great republick*; bound together, by the ſymmetry of its parts, and by the natural ties of a common religion, like forms of policy, and a ſimilitude of manners. To ſuppreſs the idea of inteſtine war, and overrule the propenſity to diſcord; a council of peace, in its authority, and conſtitution, reſembling that of the *Amphyctions* in antient Greece, was propoſed to be inſtituted. Compoſed of the plenipotentiaries from the various ſtates, and acting as the ſenate of the Chriſtian commonwealth, it was to take cognizance of all diſputes among the Princes, and either, ſpeedily bring them to an amicable iſſue, or interpoſe their compulſive decree, which could not be reſiſted by any party. It was reckoned, that ſixty-ſix delegates, to be re-elected every three years, might properly conſtitute this ſupreme council. But, whether it ſhould be fixed in its place of meeting, or ambulatory, remained under conſideration. It was thought, rather erroneouſly, that its ſeparation into three bodies, reſident in as many central

The great council of peace.

central cities of Europe, might be advantageous. The minute diſcuſſion of this part of the ſcheme, and the improvements it might receive, were to be more fully attended to, and determined at the general congreſs of the envoys.

Having traced out the view that is given, of Henry's great deſign, it falls next to be conſidered, upon what peculiar, and ſtriking motives, he might be prompted to ſuch refined ſpeculations, with reſpect to the ſyſtem of Europe; and what proſpect there was of his being able to execute, either in part, or in whole, a ſcheme ſo complex and problematical.

Probable motives of Henry to his deſign,

With reſpect to the firſt point; it is probable that Henry, having acquired ſuch ſignal glory in war, wiſhed to render himſelf no leſs eminent, above other Princes, by his deſigns in peace. It was natural to him, to embrace a political ſcheme, diametrically oppoſite to that of his adverſary Philip II.; whoſe conſtant exertions of his craft, and of his power, to embroil, or ſubvert kingdoms, he is ſaid early to have abhorred. In conſidering how this inſatiable ambition might be effectually curbed, in Philip, and his allies of the Auſtrian blood; ſuch a ſcheme, as has been explained, might preſent itſelf to the mind of a Prince, ſo capable as Henry was, of forming the moſt extenſive views. It is certain, that, in their judgment of the inſanity of making great conqueſts, he and his miniſter were perfectly agreed. All dreams of this kind were reſigned by them, from nobler and more ſolid aims for the aggrandizement of France. Their ſcheme, therefore, with regard to Europe, correſponded with this theory; and its object was, to range the nations into a ſyſtem of peace. They might, likewiſe, diſcover a high degree of inhumanity, and the feature of barbariſm, in the oppoſite principles of policy, which had ever prevailed in all the cabinet councils of the Princes and ſtates of Europe. From the im-

proved

proved civilization of this quarter of the globe, it would ſeem poſſible, that a more generous and amicable policy might be introduced. After the connection, and intercourſe promoted among the European nations, by the extenſion of trade, by the diffuſion of arts, by the community of literature, and by a general liberality of ſentiments, and politeneſs of manners; it might be ſuppoſed, that wars could be more ſuppreſſed among them, and peace rendered more permanent, than among the tribes of the barbarous regions. Upon theſe motives, and ideas, Henry may be reckoned to have adopted in ſpeculation, that ſcheme for a general union among the Chriſtian powers, which is unfolded in Sully's memoirs.

That it appeared to him a practicable one, at leaſt in ſuch extent as to merit his ſtudy and attention, is evinced, by his holding a correſpondence with Queen Eliſabeth upon it, and by his diſcloſing it to her ſucceſſor, in the manner which has been mentioned. Tho' the ſituation of France, for ſeveral years after the peace of Vervins, did not permit him to open ſo great a ſcene of action, and the death of that Princeſs, his beſt ally, cooled his thoughts with reſpect to it; there is ſufficient evidence that he ſtill kept it in view. His apprehenſion of the want of confederates to join with him, was removed by two political circumſtances, which had a peculiar influence in that period. It appeared, that the turbulence, bloodſhed, and devaſtation, created by the religious wars, had produced a general horror of the revival of them, in the catholic, as well as proteſtant ſtates; and it was daily more perceived, that ſeveral nations of Europe wanted only ſo powerful a Prince as Henry, to lead the way to the aſſault of the Auſtrian domination. The Popes, Clement VIII. and Paul V. were far from being ſo bigoted, or tyrannical, in the exercile of their ſpiritual power, as their predeceſſors had ſhown themſelves. Henry, who had eſtabliſhed the edict of Nantes, in his kingdom, was in high eſteem and confidence with both.

Circumſtances favourable to its execution.

both. He found them inclined, from their own judicious reflections on the political ſtate of Europe, to act with moderation, and to perform the part of mediators of the differences of the Chriſtian Princes. Inſtead of promoting leagues againſt the proteſtant ſtates, they wiſhed to behold a balance of power eſtabliſhed in Europe, and a confederacy formed, under their authority, againſt the Turkiſh and infidel nations. Theſe were ſingular advantages for the advancement of Henry's ſcheme; and he failed not to improve them.

Diſpoſition of many ſtates to combine againſt the houſe of Auſtria.

It is remarkable, that ſuch was the diſpoſition of many catholic and proteſtant ſtates, to combine againſt the houſe of Auſtria, that the ſucceſs of Henry's ſolicitation of it, by his envoys, ſoon exceeded his own hopes. While he proceeded, with ſome caution, and reſerve, in his negotiations; a number * of the German Princes had aſſembled at Hall, in Suabia, to conſult about reſtoring the antient freedom of the Germanic body. To their meeting, the deputies of the States of Holland, and the envoys of the Prince of Orange, and the Duke of Savoy, had alſo repaired. The reſult of their deliberations was, an engagement to union; and a reſolution to ſend their ambaſſadors into France, with offers of an offenſive and defenſive league with Henry, againſt the Emperor, and his adherents. By their arrival, it was manifeſt, that Germany ſtretched out her arms to embrace his deſign. He found it no leſs eaſy to engage the Duke of Savoy to become a partizan in it. He concluded with this Prince, the ſon-in-law of Spain, the treaty of Bruſol; by which he ſtipulated to put him in poſſeſſion of the Milaneze. Various other alliances were formed by him; the political import of which cannot be explained, but in connection with his great deſign. By ſecuring an admiſſion into Germany and Italy, it

* Heiſ. Hiſt. de L'Empire, liv. 3. p. 339. Sully, liv. 27. Henault. p. 391.

it was evident, that nothing could obſtruct his auſpicious commencement of it.

As the court of Rome, in that age, was the hinge of every great movement among the catholic powers; Henry took care to conciliate the Pope's approbation of his enterpriſe. With the tempting propoſal of the conceſſion of the kingdom of Naples to the Holy See; and other aſſurances that Henry gave about maintaining all the rights of the catholic church, and the immunities of the clergy; Paul V. became an adherent to his project. When he began to act with more vigour, and to make open preparations for the expedition; almoſt every advice he received, of the progreſs of his envoys at foreign courts, contributed to his encouragement. The Kings of England, Sweden, and Denmark, with the republicks of Venice, and Holland, expreſſed, all of them, in ſtrong terms, their approbation of his undertaking. The proteſtants of Upper Auſtria, Hungary, and Bohemia, engaged to make a powerful diverſion, upon theſe borders of the empire. The attachment of theſe allies was increaſed, by Henry's ſolemn, and repeated proteſtations, that he would neither appropriate, nor claim, any portion of the conqueſts, that might be made, to himſelf. Upon his engaging to the Pope, to yield up his rights to the kingdom of Navarre, and the county of Rouſſillon, in exchange for Naples, and Sicily, which were to be beſtowed on his Holineſs; it is ſaid, that Ubaldini the Nuncio, named the number of the troops his maſter would furniſh for the grand expedition.

It is ſuperfluous, to mention the computation made of the forces promiſed by the different powers. Upon ſuppoſition, that the Princes of Germany, the Duke of Savoy, and the States of Holland, only, had fulfilled their expreſs engagements, which can hardly be doubted; it is unqueſtionable, that Henry's own military power,

joined with theſe auxiliaries, was ſufficient to have penetrated into the heart of Germany, and Italy. By the diſplay of his banners, in theſe regions, every adverſe power would have been, ſoon, thrown into conſternation, and perplexity. All the reſources of the Emperor would have been preſently cut off; and, from the revolt of the cities of Italy, and the confuſion of thoſe of Flanders, the Catholic King could have afforded him no aſſiſtance.

From this view of the ſtate and diſpoſition of the European powers, and of the preparations made by Henry IV. it may be eaſily judged, whether he undertook an impracticable, or even any very hazardous enterprize; by determining to execute the firſt part of his great deſign. With a domeſtic proviſion for war, ſuperior to what had been ſeen in almoſt any other ſtate; with the voices of many Princes of Europe in his favour; with the allurements he preſented to them, and others, from the ſpoils of the houſe of Auſtria; there appears to be no doubt, that he would have obliged this adverſary to ſubmit to his conditions of peace.

Probable eſtimate of the iſſue of Henry's deſign, to overthrow the Auſtrian power.

When the more refined part of his ſcheme, about the new diviſion of the ſtates, is contemplated, the following obſervation merits our regard: Upon the ſuppoſed, and probable, overthrow of the Auſtrian dominion, in Germany and Italy, Hungary and Bohemia; ſome different arrangement of the unhinged ſtates muſt have been propoſed for them, and, at length, taken place. The queſtion, then, ſeems to be, Whether the power of the armed and victorious confederates would have been directed, and proved effectual, to over-rule all partial and factious commotions in thoſe communities, and to give, to each of them, that political form, which its natural biaſs, or its inverted ſituation, appeared to require, and was moſt conſiſtent with its future tranquility. It is no vague preſumption to reckon, that, under the arbitration of the Pope, in concert with

ſuch

ſuch a Prince as Henry IV. a concurrence of the principal powers, in one ſcheme, would have been maintained; and that the projected model of the ſtates might have been accompliſhed, with more concord, and facility, than confederate Princes divide their conqueſts among them.

In general, it may be obſerved, that the nature and extent of every great political ſcheme, which tranſcends the known tract, and aſſumes a height of refinement, always repreſent it, to ordinary minds, as involved in difficulties, and impracticable. When diſtance of time, from the period of its birth, likewiſe contributes to darken it, and the circumſtances, then favourable to it, cannot be placed in their full light, it is more readily pronounced, even by the moſt intelligent, to be entirely chimerical. In this age, perhaps, we cannot juſtly eſtimate all the advantages which Henry found, for the execution of his deſign. The propenſities to a political change, in various ſtates, the principles of union among the Chriſtian powers, which have ſince ceaſed; and the repoſe deſireable to many nations, after their religious wars, could only be clearly perceived, and have diſcovered all their influence, in that aera of Europe. Though it ſhould be judged, that, neither any effectuated arrangement of the ſtates, nor the authority of the Pope, nor that of Henry's own great name, could be ſufficient to eſtabliſh ſuch a ſyſtem of peace, and concord, as the ſcheme propoſed; ſome greater ſuſpenſion of inteſtine war, ſome happier change of the views of Princes, as to conqueſts upon one another, than ever had been ſeen in Europe, might have proved the beneficial conſequence of the great enterpriſe, and the conjuncture. If the council of plenipotentiaries could not be rendered the *ſenate* of the Chriſtian republic, it might have yet anſwered the great ends of a more perfect eſtabliſhment. The attachment of Princes, and ſtates, to their ſelfiiſh, and injurious policy, is ſupported upon the contracted, and par-

The refined part of Henry's ſcheme problematically conſidered.

tial ſyſtem, in which they ever act. They make war out of vanity or ambition, and treaties of peace, from intereſted motives. All their maxims of ſtate are founded on their particular advantages, without reſpect to any common intereſt of the nations around them, or of mankind. By Henry's ſcheme, they would have been called, as members of a great confederacy, to deliberations for the general peace of Europe, and for the benefit, defence, and glory, of her nations. Drawn forth into this enlarged ſphere, ſhall we ſay, that, even kings, and miniſters of ſtate, would have launched into views, above the level of the domeſtic cabinet, and learned to place their honour in affording protection, and extending the influence of the peaceful arts, to thoſe nations, which private ambition would have led them to ſubdue? But we muſt hold a cautious pen, upon this tranſporting part of our ſubject; and conclude, that the political conſequences cannot be traced, with certainty; as any ſuch grand experiment, upon the ſyſtem of Europe, was never made.

Henry's preparations for his enterpriſe.

Intent upon his great enterpriſe, Henry employed the whole winter 1609, and the ſpring following, in preparations for it. Advice being received of the death of the Duke of Cleves, and of the eruption of conteſt, in conſequence of it; the levies of the army, deſtined for the borders of Germany, were completed to twenty-five thouſand men. The experienced and brave Leſdiguieres was appointed to form another body of troops, on the ſide of Italy, to the number of ten thouſand foot, and two thouſand horſe. The pay of the royal army, computed to forty thouſand ſoldiers, upon its entrance into Germany, and the ſubſidies promiſed to Henry's allies, together with all other charges, were accurately calculated by Sully, and the funds for them provided for three years *. As the expedition might require this ſpace of time, Henry made the diſpoſi-

tion

* Pereſixe, p. 231. Sully, liv. 27.

tion of all affairs, within his kingdom, proper for his abſence. He nominated a council of fifteen perſons, to aſſiſt his Queen, Mary of Medicis; who was to preſide in the government, with the title of Regent. In every determination, the majority of the voices of the council was made neceſſary. General inſtructions were alſo drawn up, to direct their procedure; and, in matters of great difficulty, his Majeſty was to be advertiſed, and his deciſion expected. He carried further his political attention. To regulate the exertion of the powers of the Regent, and council, in the extenſive and remote provinces of the kingdom; he ordained the inſtitution of a ſmall council, in every one of them. It conſiſted of five perſons, taken from the clergy, the nobility, the counſellors of juſtice, the officers of the revenue, and the magiſtrates of the cities; whoſe province was, to correſpond with the ſupreme council, and act, miniſterially, under it.

He, next, proceeded to appoint ambaſſadors, to reſide, during his abſence from France, at the different courts of Europe. Furniſhed with proper inſtructions, upon the ſubject of his expedition, they were, in a ſhort time, to publiſh, every where, the explanatory and accurate memorials, framed with regard to its deſign. Others, conceived in a pathetic ſtile of exhortation, were to be preſented, by the Pope's legates, to the Emperor, the King of Spain, and the Princes of their houſe; conjuring them, by the common law of humanity, and the right of nations, by the ſpecial bond of the Chriſtian faith, and its ties; ſo far to relinquiſh their uſurped dominion in Europe, that its ſtates might join in an equal, and durable league of peace, and turn their united arms againſt the infidel powers. Until repeated trials of amicable negociation proved ineffectual, the method of it was to be purſued. Then, all ſuch princes, and ſtates, as had claims of right, and redreſs, againſt the invaſions of the Auſtrian family, were to be called upon to aſſert them;

them; and profecute, by open war, the reduction of its power, within the due bounds.

The Duke of Cleves's death an opening to the execution of it.

The propoſed opening of Henry's enterpriſe, by his taking poſſeſſion of the dutchy of Cleves, was founded on the equitable purpoſe of redreſſing a particular injury; as the object of it was, the removal of a general one. Upon the deceaſe of the Duke of Cleves, ſeveral natural heirs claimed the ſucceſſion *. The Emperor, Rodolph II. ſequeſtered the dutchy in the hands of his kinſman, the Biſhop of Strazbourg, and aſſiſted him in ſeizing its dependent territory of Juliers, and Berg. Several of the claimants, conſidering this procedure as a rejection of their titles, applied to Henry for reparation of the wrong done them; which he engaged to execute. In this manner was the line marked out, for the motion of his army to the confines of Germany; and it was, in every reſpect, the propereſt one that could be choſen, for preſerving his communication with France, and opening that with his allies in Holland, and Flanders †. It was, accordingly, determined, to form his magazines upon the Maiſe, and the Rhine; and to eſtabliſh a chain of forts and garriſons, in theſe convenient borders; that, by ſuch means, he might either ſecure an honourable retreat from Germany, or perform an expedition, ſuperior in glory to whatever had been attempted in Europe. This ſeries of meaſures, purſued by Henry, which reſts not upon the authority of Sully's memoirs, is a manifeſt evidence, that the enterpriſe he meditated, inſtead of being a deſultory, and unconcerted one, was the reſult of mature deliberation, and of the moſt momentous nature. On account of the various ſtipulations with his confederates, the French miniſtry, after his death, were at a loſs how to ſtop, with reputation, in the military career, and decline his engagements.

Alrea-

* Heiſſe, Hiſtoire, ibid. Pereſixe.

† Pereſixe, ibid. p. 216.

Already the French troops had begun to file off, in diviſions, towards their general rendezvous in Champage *. A diſtinguiſhable body of four thouſand nobleſſe, alone a bright preſage of victory, prepared to encompaſs their King in the field. The artillery, and warlike ſtores, moved from the arſenal. A ſhort miſſive, from Henry, acquainted the Archduke, Albert, at Bruſſels, of his intended march, through part of his territories; and that he wiſhed to know, whether he would be received as a friend, or an adverſary. Nothing detained him in Paris, but regard to the intended ceremony of his Queen's coronation; which appeared the more neceſſary to be performed, when the charge of the ſtate was, for a ſpace of time, to be committed to her.

The French troops in motion.

During this ſhort delay of his departure, an unaccountable uneaſineſs oppreſſed the mind of this intrepid Prince. Whether, in the eve of an enterpriſe, which was to conſummate his glory and fame, he might be thrown into unuſual agitation of ſpirit, or exceſſive anxiety; or whether, to the human mind is ſometimes communicated, a foreboding of its impending fate †; he could not help reflecting, often, and diſmally, upon ſeveral predictions formerly announced to him, in the manner of the times, about his ſudden, and violent death. Dejected, and penſive, he hardly endured the ſight of the public feſtivity; and, contrary to his natural temper, earneſtly wiſhed his removal from it. He would have ſuſpended the ceremony, or quitted Paris, with good will; but his reſpect to the Queen, and a ſenſe of the unbecoming weakneſs, ſuffered him to follow neither the one nor the other ſuggeſtion.

Henry's unuſual dejection of mind.

Tho' in the night before the fatal day, he had been bereft of ſleep; yet his humane temper would not allow him, to order Sully, who

* Ibid. p. 223. † Ibid. Perefixe, Sully, De Serres.

who was a little indiſpoſed, to attend him at the Louvre. Finding himſelf more relieved in the afternoon, he reſolved to viſit his miniſter, in the arſenal. He went into his coach, with ſix or ſeven of his courtiers. No guards were permitted to attend it. In proceeding through the city, it ſtopt in the narrow ſtreet of *Feronerie*; where two loaded carriages came in the way. The deteſtable parricide of France, Ravaillac, who had hung about the palace-gate, and now followed the coach, ſaw his opportunity. Perceiving only one of the footmen behind it, he advanced, as if going to paſs between it and the wall. Its curtains were drawn back. He knew where the King ſat. He raiſed himſelf on a ſpoke of one of the wheels, and plunged a two edged knife into the upper part of Henry's left ſide; who leaned, with his head, the other way. He could only ſay, "I am wounded;" when a repeated ſtab, piercing into the channels of his heart, deprived him of ſpeech, and quickly brought forth his laſt breath, in a deep ſigh. The ſavage aſſaſſin being ſeiſed, upon the ſpot, with the bloody knife in his hand, was reſerved for the queſtion, by torture, and exquiſite puniſhment.

Circumſtances of Henry's tragical death.

At firſt, the report of the King's being wounded, was only ſpread in Paris, which kept the people in a ſtate of anxious ſuſpenſe. But, when the rumour of his death was divulged, it is hardly to be deſcribed, into what aſtoniſhment, horror, and tranſports of grief, they were generally thrown*. The outcries of woe, and diſtreſs, were heard in every ſtreet. It appeared, by the ſtupified poſtures of ſome, the extaſies of others, and the ſad countenances of all, how Henry had engaged the hearts of the Pariſians to him. When reflection awaked the ſenſe of the loſs of him to the ſtate, the preſage of public confuſion, conſequent to it, made a deep impreſſion upon all ranks. The atrocious manner of his death, ſeemed the ſtroke of

* Pereſixe, p. 242. De Serres, ibid.

of the enemies of peace; and, when the guardian of the kingdom was aſſaſſinated, they expected nothing but the revival of all that civil diſcord, and faction, which he had quelled. It required the utmoſt pains the magiſtrates could employ, to quiet the commotions of the populace, who, yet, knew not upon whom to wreck their indignation.

Upon the horrid contrivance of his death, hiſtory can pronounce no judgement, free from ambiguity and heſitation. The veil thrown over this inquiry, by the court of parliament, from fear of inflaming the factions of the court, in a minority, could not, after a certain elapſe of time, be removed. The French hiſtorians of that age, without attempting to unravel what, by the judicial trial, was rendered more myſterious, generally content themſelves with only reporting the different opinions that prevailed with reſpect to it, or with pointing out ſome paſſage of the perplexed evidence, which ſeemed moſt ſtriking and momentous. Their later writers, for the moſt part, cheriſh the opinion, that the enthuſiaſtic parricide had no accomplices; and, as it ſeems, in reſpect to the character of their nation, for loyal and warm affection to their kings, wiſh to conſign this ſhocking impeachment of it, to obſcurity and oblivion. Too much, however, is tranſmitted in the memoirs, and detached pieces of that age, with regard to the virulence of faction in the court of Henry IV. and the implacable enmity of a party to him, to allow the inquiſitive to acquieſce in this determination *. Even Sully's Memoirs preſent ſuch a view of the ſecret plots of the Marchioneſs of Verneuil's family, for revenge, of the cabals of the Spaniſh emiſſaries with them, or with the Queen's domeſtics, and of the audacious procedure of the latter, in concert with ſome French courtiers; that any horrid act might be the reſult of ſuch

Judgment upon the contrivance of Henry's death uncertain.

 deſpe-

* Liv. 27.

deſperate cabals. When the paſſion and animoſity of ſome writers, in that period, are duly conſidered, who were affected with the cataſtrophe of ſo great a Prince, or could not rid themſelves of prepoſſeſſions; we may judge, that circumſtances are miſrepreſented, and facts ſtrained by them, in ſuch a manner, as weakens or deſtroys the credit of their narrative. But, if inattentive to this, we admit their aſſeverations, or indulge the conjectures of their ſpleen, we will be apt to conclude, that Henry met with that fate, which, to the ſhame of mankind, is known to have often befallen thoſe who have attempted, in any extraordinary manner, to advance the welfare and glory of their country.

Fond commemoration of his reign, in the French nation.

The obligations which France had to this illuſtrious Prince, were too ſignal and permanent, to be forgotten in one age. The memory of them, tranſmitted from fathers to their ſons, is ſtill preſerved, and cheriſhed, in the French nation. Notwithſtanding the grandeur, and glory of their late monarchs, the engaging character, and benignant reign of Henry IV. are contemplated with peculiar fondneſs and affection. He appears, indeed, to have placed his glory, as a King, in the happineſs of his people; an idea, which ſeems rather to have been reverſed in the grand æra, or age, as it is called, of Lewis XIV. The courſe of foreign war, that was purſued, and the revocation of the edict of Nantes, by the latter, were a clear proof of the change of the political principles. Henry, with a greater name in war than his grandſon, made the peace of Vervins, for the ſake of his people; and, inſtead of planning conqueſts, which might be ruinous to them, he aſpired only to repreſs them, all over Europe. In a period of fanatic zeal, and bigotry, when the profeſſion of it was accounted honourable, he eſtabliſhed religious toleration. In an age, when the arts and commerce were rude, and uncultivated, he endeavoured to render France opulent and powerful, by the improvement of them.

The-

The Kings and Princes of Europe, generally, condoled the deplorable exit of the moſt renowned among them. For the preventions of war, and the pacific treaties he concluded, various nations were indebted to him. His great deſign, even though allowed to be impracticable in all its extent, merited that a grateful record of his fame ſhould be indited in the annals of Europe. Since his time, the only political invention, for the maintenance of a general peace, is that of *guarrantee* treaties, which experience has long proved to be a fallacy. The common evil of war is rather multiplied by them; and one ſpark of diſſenſion is more apt to ſpread into a general flame.

In the regency of his Queen, which followed his death, when not only his political ſchemes were abandoned, but all the maxims of his government were ſubverted, detractors from his renown ſoon aroſe. Not ſatisfied with pronouncing his deſigns, with reſpect to the ſyſtem of Europe, fantaſtical, they aſſerted, that he meant, at laſt, to execute them in no other way, than by obliging the Archduke Albert, to give up the beloved Princeſs of Condé to him, by ſeizing the dutchy of Cleves, and perhaps Lorain, for himſelf; and by helping the Duke of Savoy to the poſſeſſion of the Milaneze, as the dowry due to him from Spain *. We find, in Sully's Memoirs, what is highly probable, that Henry's enemies endeavoured to propagate ſuch falſe reports, when he was on the point of ſetting out for his expedition, in order to keep up the ſpirits of their partizans, and weaken the King's credit with his allies. His purſuit of the Princeſs of Condé, carried by her ſpouſe to Bruſſels, was moſt inſiſted upon by them, as the ſtory of Henry's paſſion for her was a recent one at the court. To find it taken up, and improved, by writers ſo prejudiced againſt Henry IV. as Vittorio

Reports, and aſſertions of hiſtorians derogatory to his fame.

* Ibid.

Siri, and the author of the hiſtory of *The Mother and the Son*, is not ſurpriſing. But to ſee it adopted by hiſtorians of reputation, is a diſagreeable proof, that ſome degree of credulity, or of negligence, may be remarked in the moſt intelligent of them.

His perſonal figure.

Henry's perſonal figure was ſtrikingly advantageous. The happy proportions of his body, and their correſpondence to the idea of uncommon activity *, and vigour, were more remarkable, than his ſtature, which ſcarcely exceeded the middle ſize. Upon his countenance was drawn every manly and noble lineament. Animated features, the image of a ſpirited and diſcerning mind, diſtinguiſhed his aſpect. His forehead was broad; his noſe acquiline; and his eyes were lively and penetrating. The riſing ſentiment might, often, be read in his looks; which were expreſſive of candour, as well as of courteſy, and ſweetneſs. In the military mode of the times, he wore his muſtachios long, and his hair ſhort. He began to have grizzled locks, at the age of thirty-five, and frequently ſaid upon it, "I have been hit here by the blaſt of my early fortune."

To draw the portrait of his mind, would require an exquiſite pencil; and ſuch guidance of it, that, where ſo much panegyric is due, the ſtrokes may ſtill appear the genuine, free, and impartial diſcuſſions, as well as the bright delineation of his character. After ſo many occaſions of touching, in the courſe of his hiſtory, the intereſting lines of it; the following ſketch only pretends to exhibit them in one view.

As the ſignature of a heroic character, nature had given him that happy elevation of ſpirit, which qualifies men for great atchievements. In his mind, ſays one, intimately acquainted with it, the

* Perefixe, p. 254. Sully, liv. 28.

the idea of a proſperous ſtate of things naturally aroſe, and every adverſity ſeemed, only, a tranſient evil. Converſant in difficulties, in dangers, and oppoſition, he ever poſſeſſed the felicity of his temper, and was capable of exerting all his mental powers. The good qualities of his heart were peculiarly eminent; and no leſs inſuperable than his magnanimity. In a court, where honour, good faith, and candour, were contemned, or ſubverted; at an early age, he preſerved theſe principles. Perſevering in them, he ſuſtained the ſeveral characters of a Prince of the blood, of a chief of a party, and of a King, with ſimilar reputation. If his good fortune made the crown of France devolve to him, by the death of nine Princes, it was his incomparable valour, joined with prudence, moderation, and clemency, which put him in poſſeſſion of it. Long accuſtomed to arms, and the field, he aſſumed, with eaſe, and propriety, the ſcepter of peace; and, uncorrupted by proſperity, he ſwayed it with diſtinguiſhed honour to himſelf, and the utmoſt advantage to his people.

Sketch of his character.

His military genius, which was the admiration of his age, was almoſt equalled by his political abilities. With talents extending to every part of government; with a fund of humanity in him, that intereſted him in all public concerns, and diſpoſed him to form plans, and regulations, for the national proſperity, and even for the honour of his age, he indulged himſelf in amours, and gallantry, to a culpable exceſs. The gratification of this paſſion contraſted his great virtues, diminiſhed the exerciſe of them, and derogated from their praiſe. He incurred, from it, frequent diſquiet, domeſtic infelicity, and even perſonal danger. Though it influenced not his affairs of ſtate, it brought them into imminent peril. The weakneſs of marrying one of his miſtreſſes, to which he was inclined to give way, would have affected the peace of his government, and, probably, by a diſputable ſucceſſion at his death, undone the chief

advan-

advantages he had procured to the kingdom. So much more momentous, than men are apt to imagine, to the great line of life, and character, in every ſtation, is the proper reſtraint of what are called the gentle, and inoffenſive paſſions.

Over this blemiſh, or any other failing, which he had, as a man, or a Sovereign, no gloſs need be ſpread. Thoſe who will confound liberality with profuſion, may impute a defect of it to him. Perhaps he could not guard himſelf ſufficiently againſt thoſe, who inſinuated themſelves into his good graces, by ſoothing his favourite paſſion. Yet the ſenſe he had of this weakneſs, and his facility in hearing animadverſions upon his conduct, gave aſſurance, that he could not be betrayed into any groſs error, pernicious to his fame, or inconſiſtent with his public views. Upon the moſt rigid eſtimate, the noble, the beneficial, the laudable, and engaging excellencies of his character, ſhine forth; and muſt be ever tranſmitted to poſterity, with ſignal luſtre, and applauſe; not only in that kingdom, of which he was the reſtorer, but in every nation, which reveres, and ſeeks to adorn, with merited fame, the hero, the King, or the patriot.

The reign of Henry IV. may, juſtly, be regarded by the votaries of abſolute monarchy, as affording a ſtrong argument in favour of their ſyſtem of government. Not only the recovery of the kingdom from its inteſtine convulſions, but the change to civil order, the progreſs to every ſpecies of political improvement, which, to the happineſs of the nation, was effectuated, in a ſhort compaſs of time; may be deemed an advantage, that no ſtate could have attained, without being placed under the uncontroulable ſway of its Prince. And it cannot, indeed, be refuſed, that, where both ſignal and rapid improvements are required, monarchy is moſt ſuſceptible of them. Hence the aeras of hiſtory, antient, and modern,

mark

mark theſe political revolutions, chiefly, under the reigns of great and wiſe Princes. Upon this account, perhaps, the excellence of monarchical government may be over-rated by its admirers Men are ſtruck with more admiration of ſuch changes, from the view of them, within a ſhort period. The ſlow, but no leſs important and laudable progreſs of them, which takes place, in other political circumſtances, eſcapes obſervation, or falls ſhort of its due eſtimate. But, though we may thus admire what is ſometimes accompliſhed in monarchies, for the advancement of civil life; yet it muſt be allowed, that laws themſelves, and all political and civil inſtitutions, deſigned for extended ſociety, as well as many of the uſeful arts, require time, and the aid of experience, in order to their being properly framed and digeſted.

General idea of his government.

With regard, however, to the government of France, under Henry IV. what has been often obſerved, ought to be recollected. The juſt idea of it is, not only that of a moderate ſpecies of monarchy, in which the antient order, and regular forms of juſtice, were maintained, but where the remains of the feudal conſtitution, and various uſages, and cuſtoms, derived from it, were regarded. The aſſemblies of the States General, or of the *Notables*, ſtill ſubſiſted. Henry aſſumed not the entire or abſolute government of the revenues of the crown, but with the conſent of the latter. Beſides the compoſitions made by him, for the ſake of the public peace, with many of the chieftains of the league, which gave them a kind of independent poſſeſſion of their caſtles and governments; the French nobility, according to the degrees of that order in the ſtate, claimed preferments, and poſts of honour and profit, as the privilege of their rank, and the recompence of their ſervices in the field. In the diſtribution of offices, Henry was far from acting as an arbitrary maſter. It appears, on the contrary, that he ſhowed a facility in beſtowing them, which Sully, more rigid in his temper, and

maxims,

maxims, thought highly blameable. In ſhort, he ſuſtained the character of the head, or chief of his nobles, rather than of their abſolute lord; and, in reality, deſired more to attach them to his ſervice, from affection, than to oblige them to it by conſtraint. The conſequence of this adminiſtration, even in that turbulent and factious period, was ſurpriſingly favourable to the royal aurhority. Henry, without ſeeking to ſtrip the French nobility of the veſtiges of their antient privileges, or to ſubject them, in a deſpotic manner, to his ſway, attained all the aſcendency of a ſovereign over them; and, by means of his reputation, both for wiſdom and clemency, commanded the obedience of his kingdom to his royal edicts, as much, or more, than any of his predeceſſors had done. It may well be preſumed, that, if he had lived ſome years longer, till his ſon had grown up to a mature age, the ſceptre would have been tranſmitted by him, with ſuch advantages, that thoſe efforts which Cardinal Richelieu afterwards made to ſuſtain, and exalt the royal power, would have been altogether unneceſſary, among a people whoſe affections had been ſo much engaged by their Sovereign, and who found their national intereſt, proſperity, and glory, ſo highly advanced, by ſubmitting themſelves to his authority.

This view of Henry's government, and character, may be, properly, concluded with an account of ſome occaſional ſpeeches and repartees, related of him by the hiſtorians. Out of a number of them, the following extracts from Perefixe *, which ſhow the goodneſs of his heart, together with his natural vivacity, and quickneſs, may afford entertainment.

Henry was often heard to ſay, "That, in order to reign well, it was not neceſſary for a King to exert the utmoſt efforts of his power."

* Perefixe, Recueil de Paroles Memor. p. 275.

power." In many of his letters to the governors of provinces, and to the courts of parliament, he uſed expreſſions, which teſtified the tender concern he had for the welfare of his ſubjects. "Take care of my people, ſaid he, they are my children, and God has given me the wardſhip of them, for which I am accountable." Upon hearing that a party of his troops, in Champagne, had pillaged ſome houſes of the peaſants, he called for their Captains, in Paris; and, after reprimanding them for abſence, "Go directly, ſaid he, and give redreſs for theſe injuries. It is my concern, and your's, when the people are ruined. The ſtate muſt want its ſubſidies, and the army its pay. As God lives, I account it treaſon againſt my perſon, when violence is done to my people." The Duke of Savoy, when in Paris, admiring its opulence, aſked him to what ſum the whole revenues of France might amount? "To as much as I pleaſe," replied Henry. The Duke not underſtanding this anſwer: "Yes, added he, I ſay ſo; for, as I deſire to have the affections of my ſubjects, I can form no wiſh of wealth, that France is unable to afford." Occaſional ſpeeches and repartees of Henry.

Though no Prince had a quicker ſenſe of public juſtice, and a greater deſire to execute it, with ſteadineſs and impartiality; yet the ſtruggles he had with faction, for ſeveral years of his reign, obliged him to pardon various offenders, in caſes where he had no inclination to do it. But the courtiers, preſuming afterwards, upon his experienced mildneſs, found him often inflexible to all their ſollicitations. Roquelaure took the opportunity of his going to the communion, to requeſt the pardon of his couſin Chamand; and added, unbecomingly, that, by ſuch mercy, forgiveneſs at the altar was to be obtained. "I am now, anſwered Henry, about entreating to be forgiven of God, for not having performed ſeveral acts of exemplary juſtice. I will not be ſtumbled in this prayer." To an uncle, who implored him in behalf of his nephew, who had aſſaſſi-

nated a man, he ſaid, " You have well executed the part of a kinſman; permit me to do mine, as a King. I excuſe your ſupplication. Do you, likewiſe, excuſe the juſt denial of it I give." On a ſimilar occaſion, he exclaimed, " *Ventre-ſaint-gris;*" his uſual oath; " Do not oblige me to add this piece of injuſtice to my ſins as a King."

In the caſe of Miron, the Prevôt des Marchands in Paris, his diſcernment of particular characters, and his temperate judgment, were equally conſpicuous. As a tumult had happened in the city, Miron was accuſed of rather cheriſhing the popular rage, by ſome ſpeeches he made, which reflected on the government. Henry's miniſters repreſenting this offence to him, in the moſt aggravating light, his reply to them was in theſe terms: " From many inſtances of his behaviour, I know Miron to be a man of probity, and a good ſubject. He muſt have erred now, from a miſtaken notion of his duty, as the city-magiſtrate. But did he even aſpire to be a martyr to popularity; I will not permit him to have this honour, ſince I ſet a value upon my clemency, as well as on the dignity of my crown."

Many of Henry's replies were pointed, facetious, and ironical; and beſpoke that flow of humour, and happy gaiety of temper, which were natural to him. In the diſtreſſed condition of his affairs, upon his firſt acceſſion to the crown; when both his reflections and diſcourſe might have been, pardonably, tainted with chagrin; he ſaid, " Behold me, a King without a kingdom; a huſband without a wife; and a commander of an army, without money." Sitting at a game of hazard, he obſerved a Captain approach, who was known to fluctuate much betwixt attachment to him, and to the league. " You are welcome, ſaid the King, to look at the game; for, if I am lucky, I know you will bet upon my ſide."

He

He heard reflections on himself with remarkable temper; and, when he found them unjuſt, or thought his conduct excuſeable, he had the faculty of making that ſort of repartee, which, from its coolneſs and pleaſantry, has a much better effect, than a paſſionate, or a very ſerious one. "It is reported that I am niggardly, and love to ſave money; yet, ſaid he, I do three things inconſiſtent with this aſperſion: I make war, I make love, and I build." The Spaniſh ambaſſador, accuſtomed to the formality of his maſter's court, expreſſed his ſurpriſe at the great freedom with which Henry's nobles approached and ſurrounded him. "It is the French manner, ſaid the King, which alſo prevails in the day of battle; when they are ſeen to croud about me much more." Upon a proteſtant phyſician of character turning catholic, he ſaid to Sully, "How deſperately ſick muſt your religion now be when the Doctors forſake it." Forty Swiſs deputies having come to Paris, who were to be entertained at the expence of the city, during their ſtay; and, according to the manner of that nation, to be abundantly refreſhed with drink; Henry was aſked, whether a ſmall contribution might not be levied upon the public wells of Paris, to defray this charge. "Find ſome other means for it, ſaid he. It is too much to pretend to imitate a miracle, by turning your water into wine."

The fatal death of Henry IV. enſued in the fifty-ſeventh year of his age, and the twenty-firſt of his reign. He bore the ſeparate title of King of Navarre for ſeventeen years. His Queen, Mary of Medicis, brought him ſix children. At his death, Lewis, the eldeſt of his two ſons, was only nine years of age. He aſſumed the reigns of government, after a regency of ſeven years, by his mother.

FINIS.